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National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*

State of Qatar

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Introduction

1. The State of Qatar presented its initial national report at the seventh session of the universal periodic review in February 2010. The report was adopted at the fourteenth session of the Human Rights Council, which made 112 recommendations of which Qatar accepted 87.

2. The second national report completes the plan of action that Qatar began to implement following the discussion and adoption of its initial report, in which it highlighted achievements and initiatives to promote and protect human rights and positive interactions with the relevant international organizations.

3. The present report is committed to respect the outcomes of the initial universal periodic review and, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 17/19, it highlights progress made since the submission of the initial report and indicates the efforts made by Qatar to follow up on and implement the recommendations that it accepted, as well as pointing to future challenges and perspectives.

I. Methodology for follow-up to the review and preparation of the report

A. Methodology for follow-up to the review

4. Qatar is willing to implement the commitments arising from the discussion of its initial report and has made every effort to pursue a methodology based on continuity. A standing committee was established to prepare reports for the universal periodic review and to follow-up on the recommendations made following submission of reports. The committee was established by decision of the Council of Ministers at its regular session No. 33 of 24 November 2010 by the authorities that compiled the initial report. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presides over the committee and its members include the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Consultative Assembly, the Supreme Council for Health, the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, the Supreme Council for Education, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking and the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Children and Women. The committee is responsible for the preparation of the second periodic report and for following up on the implementation of the associated recommendations, in addition to the preparation of subsequent reports. The committee compiled and submitted the recommendations to the competent authorities for implementation.

B. Preparation of the report and the consultation process

5. In view of the criteria, bases, objectives and principles of the universal periodic review mechanism as defined by the Human Rights Council, Qatar formulated a plan of action for drafting its second report that included the following elements:

- Presentation of the universal periodic review mechanism and the functions of the national committee to relevant stakeholders, including members of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations and media institutions working in the field of human rights, in order to involve them in the preparation of the national report by consulting them and

considering their views. The committee invited these stakeholders to provide information on human rights in Qatar relating to their spheres of competence;

- Study and analysis by the committee of the human rights information provided and recording of that information in the report in accordance with the criteria and bases of the review;
- Review by the committee of the human rights reports submitted by Qatar to the United Nations treaty bodies in respect of the conventions to which Qatar is a party and review of the resultant recommendations;
- Organization of workshops to offer all stakeholders the opportunity to express their views and observations on the information in the report;
- Launch of the committee's Internet website in order to offer the opportunity to all to express any observations or views on human rights in Qatar;
- Updating of the pamphlet published by the committee in Arabic and English in the context of preparation of the initial report and its distribution to all stakeholders;
- Presentation of the final draft of the second national report to the National Human Rights Committee in order to solicit its views.

II. Developments in the promotion and protection of human rights

A. Legislative developments

6. Since its adoption of the initial report, Qatar has enacted and amended various laws and other legislation in support of human rights, of which the most important are:

- **Human Trafficking Act**

  The Human Trafficking Act (Act No. 15 of 2011) was enacted. The Act, which contains 28 articles, aims to combat human trafficking, to protect victims, whether they be natural or moral persons, and to provide the necessary guarantees for respect of their rights, in addition to providing them with rehabilitation and compensation for material and moral damages sustained at the hands of traffickers.

- **Criminal Code**

  Pursuant to the recommendations of the Committee against Torture, Qatar amended the Criminal Code by the introduction of an explicit definition of torture that is fully consistent with article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The objective of making this explicit provision is to strengthen the absolute prohibition of torture as intended in the Qatari Constitution and to clarify the gravity of the offence. Moreover, it demonstrates the support of Qatar for a total ban on torture under any circumstances. The provision was included in Act No. 8 of 2010 amending the Criminal Code, promulgated by Act No. 11 of 2004.

- **Health and Education Fund Act**

  Act No. 6 of 2013 on the Health and Education Fund was enacted. The Act, which contains 30 articles, aims to provide sustainable financial resources to support health and education services and authorities, consistent with the higher interests of the State, in addition to providing support in cases of emergency.

- **Health and Social Security Act**

  The Health and Social Security Act (Act No. 7 of 2013) was enacted. The Act, which contains 30 articles, aims to make the health insurance system compulsory in order to ensure the provision of basic health services to all Qatari citizens, citizens of Gulf Cooperation Council States and residents and visitors to the country.

B. Institutional developments

Qatar Foundation for Social Action

7. A decision to establish the Qatar Foundation for Social Action was issued on 14 July 2013. The Foundation is a higher body which, through a unified Board of Directors, monitors and oversees the following institutions and centres: the Qatar Foundation for the Care of Orphans; Qatar Foundation for the Care of the Elderly; and the Qatar Foundation for Social Welfare and Protection, which includes the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children, the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking and the Social Rehabilitation Centre, the Shafallah Centre for Children with Special Needs, the Family Consulting Centre and the Social Development Centre. The Foundation is responsible for preparing and developing the plans, programmes, policies and strategies needed in order to achieve the objectives of civil society institutions and follow up on their implementation, in cooperation and coordination with government ministries and agencies and public and private bodies and institutions in Qatar and abroad, with a view to exchanging experiences and information relevant to the Foundation's goals. It provides training to its staff on dealing with civil society institutions and issues periodicals, pamphlets and manuals on the achievement of the Foundation's goals. In addition, it is responsible for the establishment of standing and ad hoc committees; enlisting the support and specialist knowledge of experts at home and abroad; working to achieve the goals set out in international instruments relating to social action through civil society institutions; following up on all efforts by civil society institutions to implement the international conventions and instruments relevant to its aims; and convening conferences and courses on topics related to the Foundation's goals.

National Committee for the implementation of international humanitarian law

8. The National Committee for the implementation of international humanitarian law was established pursuant to Council of Ministers decision No. 27 of 2012. The committee aims to advise and assist the Government with regard to the implementation and dissemination of the rules of international humanitarian law. The establishment of this Committee is a significant step towards ensuring the effective application of international humanitarian law by assessing the existing national legislation and making recommendations that aim to push the implementation process forward. In addition, the Committee plays a role in the study and dissemination of international humanitarian law.

Administrative Control and Transparency Authority

9. The Administrative Control and Transparency Authority was established pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 75 of 2011. The Authority, which seeks to achieve control, transparency and professional integrity and to combat all forms of corruption, is under the direct authority of the Amir of Qatar.

National Committee for Occupational Health and Safety

10. The National Committee for Occupational Health and Safety was established pursuant to Council of Ministers decision No. 16 of 2011 as a result of the efforts of the

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in cooperation with experts from the International Labour Organization (ILO). The remit of the Committee includes making proposals on national policy, programmes and a national occupational safety and health system; studying the causes of injuries in the workplace and proposing ways of preventing them in future; proposing and reviewing occupational health and safety rules and regulations at the State level; proposing implementing mechanisms for laws, regulations and decisions relating to occupational health and safety; providing advisory services in relation to occupational health and safety; and reviewing insurance requirements for workplace injuries and occupational diseases and due compensation in that regard in accordance with the Labour Code.

Climate Change and Clean Development Committee

11. A Climate Change and Clean Development Committee was established and its sphere of competence defined pursuant to Council of Ministers decision No. 15 of 2011. The Committee aims to follow up on the meetings of States parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the recommendations made at those meetings; to propose the necessary national policies and plans of action with regard to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Qatar in order to ensure that government and non-governmental agencies in Qatar abide by the obligations established under the Convention and its Protocol and to prepare the necessary studies and reports in this connection; to contribute to the preparation of national periodic reports; to propose a clean development mechanism strategy; and to participate in local, regional and international activities relevant to the work of the Committee.

Standing Committee on Emergencies

12. The Standing Committee on Emergencies was restructured pursuant to Council of Ministers decision No. 14 of 2011, which made the Committee broader and more comprehensive. The Committee is responsible for preparing studies and for developing plans and measures to deal with disasters, in addition to formulating rules and regulations to ensure that aid is delivered rapidly to victims. It is also responsible for taking steps to ensure that transport and communications are safe and secure and for developing and disseminating awareness-raising plans through the media, as well as for taking the necessary measures to deal with natural disasters, fires, buildings collapse and other disasters.

Qatar Committee for Alliance of Civilizations

13. The Qatar Committee for Alliance of Civilizations was established pursuant to Council of Ministers decision No. 8 of 2010. The Committee aims to highlight the role of civilizations in enhancing human development, to strengthen dialogue and resolve conflicts and to promote tolerance, cooperation and peace between the peoples of the world, in addition to combating intolerance and extremism. The Committee seeks to establish close cooperation between races, religions and cultures.

National Road Safety Committee

14. Qatar attaches great importance to transport, which is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable human development. This concern is manifest in the issuance of Council of Ministers decision No. 33 of 2010 on the establishment of the National Road Safety Committee, members of which are drawn from the Ministry of the Interior and the responsible national authorities, to assume responsibility for drafting road safety policies.

C. Developments in policy and strategy

1. Human rights from a development planning and strategy perspective

15. Qatar has given increasing attention to human rights since submitting its initial report. It has taken numerous legislative, legal, administrative and other measures to realize human rights and to provide sufficient means to establish, develop and update them in a context of integrated social development. This attention has been linked to national points of reference, principally the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy 2011–2016, in addition to other sectoral strategies. These points of reference form an established supporting environment for the realization of the human rights contained in international instruments. Qatar has adopted the National Vision as well as a number of strategies, as described below.

Qatar National Vision 2030

16. The National Vision aims to transform Qatar into an advanced society capable of achieving sustainable development and of ensuring and maintaining living standards for its people, from generation to generation, by 2030. This vision involves key issues relating to rights in the areas of education, health and environment, in addition to the rights of migrant workers, the empowerment of women and the rights of the child.

National Development Strategy 2011–2016

17. The National Development Strategy aims to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030 through the formulation of strategic sectoral plans and programmes covering four main areas, namely, human, social, economic and environmental development.

Labour Market Sector Strategy 2011–2016

18. The Labour Market Sector Strategy strives to ensure that the workforce has the skills and capacities to achieve national development priorities.

Overall Family Strategy 2010

19. The Overall Family Strategy aims to empower, protect and ensure the welfare of the family and family members. It consists of eight main themes, namely: affirmation of the Arab and Islamic identity of the family; promotion of the status of the family in society; dissemination of education, including within the family; eradication of illiteracy; family health care and improvement of the available preventive and therapeutic services; improvement of family living conditions; promotion of cultural values in the family; development of the scientific and technological potential of the family; broadening the participation of family members in decision-making; and protection of the family against all forms of exploitation and violence.

Family Cohesion and Empowerment of Women Strategy 2011–2016

20. This strategy is one of the 14 component sectoral strategies of the National Development Strategy and comes under the umbrella of social development. Responsibility for the launch and follow-up to this strategy has been assigned to the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, in coordination with founding partners. The three main themes of the strategy are family cohesion, family welfare and the empowerment of women.

National Health Strategy 2011–2016

21. The National Health Strategy aims to introduce changes to the health-care system and to provide effective and affordable world-class comprehensive health care for all, taking into account the different needs of men, women and children. The strategy includes 35 projects.

National Primary Healthcare Strategy 2013–2018

22. The National Primary Healthcare Strategy aims to confront and tackle the health challenges of the future through the achievement of eight goals, namely: improving health, diagnosis, emergency care, chronic non-communicable diseases, home care, mental health, mother and newborn care, child and adolescent health.

Education and Training Strategy 2011–2016

23. The Education and Training Strategy aims to establish an education system on a par with world-class education systems that will meet the needs of Qatari citizens and society through the provision of educational curricula and training programmes that meet the current and future needs of the labour market, high-quality educational and training opportunities suited to the aspirations and capacities of every individual and life-long continuing education programmes for all. It also aims to create a national formal and informal education network that will equip Qatari children and youth with the skills and high motivation needed for them to contribute to the construction and advancement of their society, by: strengthening national values and traditions and preserving the national heritage; encouraging young people to create, innovate and develop their capacities; fostering a spirit of belonging and citizenship; promoting participation in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities. Moreover, the strategy seeks to provide advanced, independent educational institutions that manage their affairs efficiently in accordance with centralized guidelines and are accountable, in addition to an effective system for funding scientific research based on the principle of public-private sector partnership in cooperation with the relevant international bodies and leading international research centres, as well as seeking to establish an active role for Qatar in international cultural and intellectual activities and scientific research.

2. National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking

24. The National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking aims to prevent human trafficking and to ensure that victims receive protection, care and support, through national, regional and international cooperation on training and capacity-building for personnel working in the field of law enforcement.

Strategic Plan of the National Human Rights Committee 2011–2014

25. The Strategic Plan of the National Human Rights Committee aims to promote and disseminate a culture of human rights in Qatar by raising awareness and providing training on human rights to different groups. It also aims to provide protection and assistance to victims, to strengthen Arab, regional and international cooperation with regard to human rights, to build the capacities of civil society institutions, to encourage Qatar to accede to international conventions and to strengthen national legislation. Moreover, it aims to promote human rights education and advance human rights.

National Road Safety Strategy 2013–2022

26. The National Road Safety Strategy was introduced in Qatar with a view to reducing the number of victims of road traffic accidents and the resultant annual toll of deaths and severe injuries, as a step towards achieving the long-term vision for road safety.[1]

D. Developments in awareness-raising

27. The Supreme Education Council attaches considerable importance to the promotion of a culture of human rights, in the context of national efforts to promote and disseminate human rights. It has introduced a number of initiatives, including by:

- Creating human rights groups in educational establishments and preparing teachers to contribute to disseminating a culture of human rights;
- Designating a human rights day in schools and organizing competitions on the rights of the child — "Know Your Rights" — in coordination with the National Human Rights Committee;
- Developing a set of guidelines to ensure that human rights are incorporated in educational programmes.

28. The Ministry of the Interior has organized high-quality, specialized training workshops on human rights topics and prepared training packages for Ministry departments for the past three years (2010–2012), as part of continuing efforts to provide training to law enforcement personnel on human rights. The Human Rights Department supports the human rights training offered by the Police Training Institute by organizing specialized courses.

29. In the same context, the Centre of Legal and Judicial Studies in the Ministry of Justice teaches human rights and international humanitarian law as part of all mandatory courses for judges, prosecutors, jurists and lawyers. The Centre also holds training workshops for military and civilian law enforcement personnel and authorities on the application of the rules of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

30. Qatar continues its efforts to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers. In this context, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has established an advisory and guidance team, which is responsible for:

- Educating workers about their rights and duties as established by law;
- Familiarizing workers with the provisions of the Labour Code and its implementing decisions;
- Raising awareness of occupational health and safety requirements during field visits to construction sites and administrative and residential places of work;

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[1] تركز الاستراتيجية على رؤية عامة ومشتركة بين الجهات المعنية حيث إنها تمثل إطار عمل لتحديد الالتزامات المطلوبة ومرجعا لتنفيذ مبادرات السلامة المرورية ذات الأولوية القصوى والأكثر فاعلية. وتعد هذه الاستراتيجية مكملة لغيرها من الاستراتيجيات القائمة في دولة قطر كاستراتيجية المخطط الشمولي، والنقل المستدام، وإدارة الطلب على النقل. وتشمل الاستراتيجية على خطة عمل للسلامة المرورية الوطنية في قطر 2013-2017 تقوم بتنفيذها 13 جهة مختلفة بالدولة، بهدف رفع أداء السلامة المرورية في قطر كي تكون من بين الأفضل في العالم وجعل طرقها هي الأكثر أماناً على مستوى العالم. وسيتحقق ذلك من خلال برنامج طموح لنشاط ومشاريع تنفذ على مدار الخمسة أعوام المقبلة.

- Establishing a bridge of communication and building trust between workers and the Ministry of Labour;
- Providing advice on employment contracts and responding to any inquiries;
- Tackling outstanding problems between workers and employers;
- Distributing brochures, pamphlets and publications to workers informing them of their rights and duties and of occupational health and safety requirements.

31. Moreover, the National Human Rights Committee makes vigorous efforts to publish and disseminate the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. These efforts include the Conference to Protect Journalists and the associated workshops and recommendations, and the Martyr Ali Hassan Al Jaber Award. In addition, the Committee has prepared teaching manuals for the incorporation of human rights in academic curricula at all levels of education and has developed the "My rights as a child" programme, which is implemented at a number of independent and private schools.

32. As part of outreach activities to protect women and children, the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children has continued to combat discrimination against women by promoting a culture of women's rights and equality of opportunity. It has done so through a number of programmes, including by:

- Preparing, publishing and distributing brochures and leaflets on the promotion of a culture that protects women's rights;
- Holding seminars, workshops and conducting campaigns to combat sexual violence against women and to raise the awareness of women and society in order to address and tackle anomalous practices, in addition to developing the legal and procedural systems in order to ensure that women enjoy comprehensive, integrated protection.

33. Qatar has continued to combat human trafficking. In this context, the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking has conducted the following activities:

- Organization of awareness campaigns for school students, administrative staff, teachers and domestic and migrant workers on the crime of human trafficking and its impact on the community;
- Organization of workshops in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for a number of national law enforcement personnel aimed at enhancing participants' awareness of the scale of human trafficking, means of combating it and how to identify and protect victims;
- Establishment of the Social Legal Clinic, a practical educational training programme conducted by the Foundation in cooperation with universities and educational institutions involved in combating human trafficking, through training students and researchers in voluntary work.

E. Developments in international cooperation

34. Qatar attaches great importance to international cooperation and deploys human and financial resources in this field. It is a member of 328 regional and global organizations and bodies. Moreover, it has 90 diplomatic missions around the world to ensure that coordination is fruitful, that the goals of international cooperation are achieved in order to promote and develop human rights.

35. On this basis, Qatar has taken the initiative of offering assistance for development to developing countries around the world. In 2011 and 2012, Qatar provided humanitarian and development assistance (governmental and non-governmental) amounting to 3,001,764,025

Qatar riyals (QR). Assistance was provided to 100 countries in different parts of the world, in particular least developed countries, to help them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In 2012, assistance accounted for 0.43 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

36. The contribution made by Qatar is not limited to the provision of humanitarian and development aid but extends to include the undertaking of humanitarian and development initiatives at the international level. Qatar has undertaken a number of initiatives, including, by way of example:

- "Hope For", an initiative launched in New York in June 2010 to improve the effectiveness and coordination of military and civil defences in response to natural disasters;
- "Dry Land" and "Education Above All", initiatives developed during 2010–2011 based on the belief of Qatar in the importance and necessity of confronting humanitarian and development challenges and of working on providing sustainable solutions to those challenges;
- "Protecting Education in Insecurity and Armed Conflict", an international initiative (formerly Education Above All) in 2008 to protect, support and promote the right to education in crisis, conflict and war zones or zones threatened by crisis, conflict and war;
- Al-Fakhurah, an initiative launched in 2009 to support and protect students and schools in conflict zones around the world and, in particular, in Gaza;
- "Teach a Child", a global initiative to reduce the number of children who lose the right to education all over the world as a result of conflicts, wars and natural disasters, as well as those living in poor areas in cities or in remote rural areas and groups that may face particular challenges in access to education, such as girls, persons with disabilities and minorities;
- Establishment of the Qatari-Mauritanian Institution for Social Development in Mauritania. Project activities include programmes to eradicate illiteracy, among children in particular, through teaching, rehabilitation and the establishment of microfoundations to assist them;
- Establishment of the Qatar Development Fund, which aims to assist Arab and other developing countries develop their economies and implement development programmes.

37. In the context of bilateral relations and international cooperation, in March 2010 Doha hosted a donor conference on investment and development in the Comoros, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, at which Qatar pledged to provide QR 73 million following the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010 and established a special Fund for the Reconstruction of Haiti for that purpose. In the same context, Qatar made a donation to Japan in the wake of the tsunami and established the Qatar Friendship Fund in cooperation with the Government of Japan in order to contribute to reconstruction efforts in the affected areas.

38. Qatar has continued to support international organizations and various United Nations agencies, in addition to making an annual contribution of US$ 100,000 to the core resources of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

III. Implementation of the recommendations accepted by Qatar

A. Accession to international treaties

39. Qatar has the political will to accede to numerous international treaties, which it believes to be important for the promotion and protection of human rights. Qatar has signed and ratified a number of international and regional human rights conventions in recent years, with a view to promoting and strengthening the legislative framework for human rights; its accession to a number of instruments in a short period of time has placed pressure on the national legislative authorities and increased their workload. In addition, Qatar has formed a committee to consider accession to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

B. Strengthening of international cooperation

40. Qatar's efforts to contribute effectively to international moves to promote and protect human rights flow from the principles enshrined in the national Constitution and, in particular, from Qatar's commitment to respect international instruments and covenants and endeavour to implement all the international agreements to which it is a party. The Constitution requires foreign policy to be guided by the principles of consolidating international peace and security, respect for human rights, renunciation of violence and the use of force, encouraging the peaceful settlement of international disputes and cooperation with peace-loving nations. In this context, Qatar has taken serious steps to implement the recommendations of the Working Group since February 2010 at the national and at the international level in order to promote human rights, based on its enduring desire to improve the human rights situation in Qatar and to strengthen constructive cooperation with the relevant special procedures. This was confirmed when Qatar accepted the recommendation to extend an open and standing invitation to special procedures mandate holders. Qatar received a visit from the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants in November 2013. Moreover, in January 2014 Qatar welcomed the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. In addition, it has received visits from numerous non-governmental organizations dealing with human rights, such as Human Rights Watch in 2012 and Amnesty International and the International Trade Union Confederation in 2013. Furthermore, in January/February 2011 Qatar hosted regional stakeholder consultations held by the Independent expert on the effects of foreign debt.

41. Qatar has continued to implement a policy of openness towards hosting global forums and conferences on development, democracy, human rights and promoting a culture of peace. Every year, it hosts the Conference for Interfaith Dialogue, as well as the U.S.-Islamic World Forum. Moreover, the Fourth Global United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum 2011 was held in Qatar. In addition, Qatar hosted numerous conferences on international trade and supported aid for trade, as well as the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, the international Climate Change Conference, the [thirteenth session of the] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and other international conferences that seek to highlight the importance of supporting international development efforts, in particular for countries of the South.

42. In this connection, Qatar is engaged in numerous activities to support development in countries of the South, and provides foreign aid and assistance to several countries in

Africa and Asia in the context of bilateral cooperation or through multilateral channels. This assistance forms a significant part of Qatar's foreign aid programme.[2] Qatar has launched a number of initiatives to promote security and stability in these areas. For example, after signing the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur it made efforts to restore peace in the area through a humanitarian programme for the return of internally displaced and exiled persons. In addition, in cooperation with the United Nations and relevant international organizations, Qatar has held a number of donor conferences such as the conference for Niger during the drought crisis, the donor conference for development and investment in the Comoros and the donor conference for Darfur. Qatari humanitarian organizations play an important role in supporting development in the countries of the South through partnerships with government and non-governmental institutions, in cooperation with international organizations in this field.

43. Qatar has undertaken to submit all of its reports to the international and regional treaty bodies and to engage in dialogue in that connection.[3] In addition, it strives to implement the recommendations of the various treaty bodies. It has withdrawn its reservations to articles 21 and 22 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and has amended its general reservation to the Convention, linking it to articles 1 and 16.

44. In the context of cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Qatar continues to support the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab region.

45. In the context of experience sharing with countries interested in combating corruption, as indicated above in the section on institutional developments, the Government established the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority.[4] It should also be noted at this juncture that the State Public Prosecutor has been selected to assume the post of United Nations Special Advocate for Stolen Asset Recovery for the Arab Spring countries.

46. The organization Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) currently plans to expand its activities to five countries by the end of 2014, namely, Tunisia, Egypt, the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank), Yemen and Myanmar. It should be noted that the organization was established in 2005 and operates under the umbrella of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. Its programme includes two main programmes. The activities of the first programme, Qatar ROTA, are conducted in Qatar, while those of the other programmes are conducted in Asia and the Middle East. The organization has made significant achievements in a number of countries around the world with regard to fundraising, the provision of relief to areas affected by natural disasters, the reconstruction and equipping of schools and the organization of campaigns to encourage Qatari schoolchildren to donate to the children of the world.

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[2] انظر الجزء (هاء) التطورات في مجال التعاون الدولي- الفقرات (33-37)، صفحة 9-10 من التقرير.

[3] حيث ناقشت الدولة تقريرها السادس عشر أمام لجنة القضاء على كافة أشكال التمييز العنصري في شباط/فبراير - آذار/مارس 2012 وناقشت تقريرها الدوري الثاني أمام لجنة مناهضة التعذيب في تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر 2012. كما قامت الدولة بتقديم تقريرها الأولي لكل من اللجنة المعنية بحقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة واللجنة المعنية بالقضاء عل كافة أشكال التمييز ضد المرأة والمقرر مناقشته في شباط/ فبراير 2014. وعلى المستوى الإقليمي، ناقشت الدولة تقريرها الأولي بشأن الحقوق والحريات المنصوص عليها في الميثاق العربي لحقوق الإنسان أمام اللجنة العربية لحقوق الإنسان في حزيران/يونيه 2013.

[4] انظر الجزء (ثانيا) التطورات في مجال تعزيز وحماية حقوق الإنسان - فقرة (9) صفحة (5) من التقرير.

47. Qatar has taken the following measures in connection with the exchange of best practices to improve the education of children with disabilities:

- Signature of a memorandum of understanding between the Supreme Council for Education, the Supreme Council for Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on meeting the needs of students with disabilities. The implementation of the memorandum has produced a number of results, principally:
  - Achievement of an academic integration programme for children with disabilities;
  - Dissemination of the Convention on the Rig[illegible]f the Child in schools;
  - Coordination with the University of Qatar to establish a degree programme in special education and a degree programme in early childhood care.

C. Measures, strategies and policies for the promotion and protection of human rights

Gender equality

48. The Constitution of Qatar reaffirms the principle of equality before the law in rights and duties for all citizens, regardless of their sex. Women are thus guaranteed protection against all forms of discrimination and so have the same opportunities to develop their capacities, protect and promote their rights and take a positive part in social development. Non-discrimination is enshrined as a general and binding principle in the Constitution. Article 34 provides that: "All citizens are equal in rights and duties". This refers to all groups in Qatari society, including men, women and children; the word "citizen" is general and applies to both men and women, without discrimination. National legislation enacted in recent years, in particular since the entry into force of the Permanent Constitution in 2004, seeks to strengthen women's rights, to eliminate discrimination between men and women and to lay the foundations for gender equality in all fields. Generic forms are used in the national legislation when stipulating rights or determining obligations, such that no distinction is made between men and women and it is clear that the provisions refer to both men and women equally, unless clearly specified otherwise. The following are examples of legal provisions that have been revoked or amended for being discriminatory against women:

- Under Act No. 19 of 2008, the blood money payable for the wrongful killing of a woman is equal to that payable for a man. Prior to the enactment of this law, the amount payable for a woman was half of that payable for a man;
- Act No. 8 of 2009 on the management of human resources abolished the exclusion of women from access to housing allowance on an equal basis with men;
- Act No. 5 of 2009 amending the Passports Act (Act No. 14 of 1993) abolished the requirement for the consent of a guardian for the issuance of a passport to a woman. The consent of a guardian is required only in the case of persons with diminished or no legal capacity;
- Act No. 2 of 2007 on the housing system gives citizens of both sexes access to the housing system. Council of Ministers Decree No. 17/2007 on priorities and conditions for housing eligibility grants unmarried citizens of both sexes who are heads of households, regardless of whether they have reached 35 years of age, the right to benefit from the housing system, whereas that right was formerly limited to men;

- Legislative Decree No. 19/2007 promulgating the Traffic Act, under which men and women are subject to the same requirements in order to obtain a driving licence.

Strengthening and advancing the role of women in society

49. In the context of its efforts to achieve social development, Qatar is committed to maintaining the family as a strong and cohesive unit and to providing the family with support, welfare and protection. Qatar's experience with regard to the advancement of women is distinctive in that it adopts a holistic approach to issues affecting women, based on the deep conviction that it is counterproductive to separate women's issues from family and social issues. Women are members of families; when their situation is improved, that of all members of the family in terms of education, health, economic status and culture is necessarily improved. The advancement of women is linked to advancements in health, education and the economic sector. Consequently, all plans to develop those sectors aim explicitly to strengthen the services provided to women and enhance their participation in those sectors at all levels. The Qatar National Vision 2030 reaffirms the need to strengthen women's capacities and to empower them to participate in political and economic life and, in particular, in decision-making. The specific goals of the national population policy include the empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equity and justice and the executive plan includes specific executive programmes for the achievement of those goals.

50. The establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs represents an important shift in concern for the family in general and for women in particular. Whereas previously women's issues were considered only in terms of welfare and protection, since the establishment of the Council the concepts of women's empowerment and participation have emerged for the first time in dealing with those issues in Qatari society. The Council has played a key role in developing legislation relating to women including, for example, by contributing to the drafting of the Family Code, setting the minimum age for marriage, establishing the premarital medical examination policy, establishing the age to which mothers have custody of children as 13 years for boys and 15 years for girls, contributing to the drafting of the Housing Act and establishing the right of women to access the housing system. In addition, the Council has adopted a human rights perspective in dealing with issues relating to women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly. It has contributed to spreading awareness of women's rights and issues through the implementation of numerous training courses, workshops, discussion panels and seminars and has contributed to strengthening scientific research on women's issues through conducting and publishing studies and research.[5]

Securing political and civil rights for women

51. The Constitution of Qatar guarantees equality between men and women with regard to participation in social life and, in particular, the right of women to vote and stand for election in all elections and referendums, to participate in policy formulation, to hold public office at all levels and to participate in organizations and associations concerned with the country's public and political life.

The course that has been taken in recent years has demonstrated clearly that the political will to empower Qatari women and enhancing their participation in government at the decision-making level exists. This will is manifest in the fact that a number of women have

[5] يمكن الإشارة إلى الدراسات والبحوث أدناه التي أجراها المجلس الأعلى لشؤون الأسرة على سبيل المثال لا الحصر: دراسة العنف ضد المرأة في المجتمع القطري، دراسة معوقات وصول المرأة للمناصب القيادية، دراسة المرأة القطرية والإنترنت، دراسة المرأة القطرية والإعلام، دراسة العنف د المتزوجات (حالة قطر).

been appointed to decision-making positions in Qatar, including the first woman Minister of Education and Higher Education from 2003 to 2009 and the Minister of Health from 2008 to 2009. Qatari women currently occupy senior leadership positions, such as the Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, the Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, the Chairperson of the Trustees of the Qatar Museums Authority, the Deputy Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Health, the Deputy Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Education, the President of Qatar University and the Minister of Communications and Information Technology. Moreover, numerous women participated in the decision-making bodies of supreme councils and government institutions and bodies and served as members of policy- and strategy-making standing committees such as the Standing Committee on Population, in addition to ad hoc committees responsible for formulating legislation in various areas. In addition, they participate in the formulation and implementation of government policy and their participation has been strengthened by their appointment to numerous diplomatic posts.

Since the first round of Municipal Council elections in 1999 and up to the 2011 elections, Qatari women have participated vigorously as voters and as candidates. Recently, it has been noted that a number of women have joined the boards of publicly traded companies, in some cases as chairpersons. In a similar vein, women are participating more actively in the elections of the board of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry; the list of candidates includes four women entrepreneurs, for the first time in its history.

52. The Human Resources Management Act provides that in addition to maternity leave, a female employee may be granted two hours of breastfeeding leave a day for one year, starting from the end of maternity leave, the times to be determined by the employee (art. 109). Moreover, the Act provides that a female Qatari employee may be granted leave to care for her children with disabilities under the age of 6 years twice during her working life for up to three years on every occasion and that the Prime Minister may, without prejudice to the public interest, grant female Qatari employees leave to care for their children in cases he deems deserving. In all cases, leave pay in the first three years is the gross salary and half of the gross salary thereafter (art. 110). The act also provides that a Muslim female employee whose spouse dies shall be granted leave for the legally prescribed waiting period (*'iddah*) of 4 months and 10 days on full pay from the date of the spouse's death or until she gives birth if she is pregnant, such leave not being deductible from her other leaves (art. 113).

53. Part Ten of the Labour Code (Act No. 14 of 2004), in articles 93–98, guarantees working women equal pay to men for equal work, equal opportunities for training and promotion as men, the right to maternity leave and breastfeeding leave for one hour a day for one year. Moreover, it provides that an employment contract may not be terminated due to the marriage of an employee or to her obtaining maternity leave and that an employer may not notify an employee of the termination of her employment contract during such leave.

54. Act No. 10 of 2003 on the judiciary does not discriminate between men and women with regard to judicial appointments. The first female judge was appointed to the Court of First Instance by an Amiri Decree issued in November 2010. In March of the same year, a woman was appointed as a judicial assistant.

55. Moreover, the Ministry of the Interior established the Committee for Women's Affairs by Ministerial decision No. 31 of 2010. The Committee is responsible for monitoring the situation of women in the Ministry and for the implementation of related public policies, for studying issues affecting women, for coordination with various governmental and non-governmental bodies with a view to achieving the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030, representing the Ministry at events and conferences,

participating in the preparation of the Ministry's strategy for women and giving impetus to dialogue and communication with the agencies responsible for women's issues.

Strengthening the juvenile justice system

56. In accordance with the Juveniles Act (Act No. 1 of 1994), the Department of Social Protection is responsible for the care and protection of minors (juveniles) through specialized social workers and psychologists. Closed sessions of the Juvenile Court are held in the Department, attended by the case social worker and the minor's guardian or lawyer.[6] A lawyer is required to attend with a minor in cases involving serious offences. In cases where a minor's guardian is not in a financial position to appoint a lawyer, the court may do so at the court's expense.

Judges sentence juveniles to imprisonment only in very few cases, such as those involving serious offences (abduction, rape) in view of the impact of such incidents on the rights of victims.

57. The juvenile justice system takes care to allocate dedicated services for juveniles and facilities equipped to ensure the welfare of juveniles who are serving sentences by separating them from older prisoners. Juveniles may not be sentenced to death. Juveniles sentenced to imprisonment may be released early for good behaviour, since the sentencing of juveniles is based on flexible judicial measures. The courts impose custodial sentences on juveniles on a minimal basis and, when they do, take care to ensure that they are served in or close to the juvenile's family milieu.

The Department of Social Protection is responsible for monitoring minors sentenced by the Juvenile Court judge to meet certain obligations and may do so over a number of months, in cooperation with other public bodies (the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage and the Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs, in addition to charitable associations) in order to determine whether the behaviour concerned has been corrected.[7]

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[6] تقدم إدارة الحماية الاجتماعية خدماتها من خلال الدور التالي:

- دار الملاحظة الاجتماعية: وهي دار حكومية تكلف من سلطة التحقيق برعاية الأحداث المنحرفين لحين تقديمهم إلى محكمة الأحداث؛
- دار التوجيه الاجتماعي: هي دار حكومية تختص بإيواء ورعاية الأحداث المعرضين للانحراف؛
- دار الإعداد الاجتماعي: هي دار حكومية تختص بإيواء ورعاية وتقويم وتأهيل الأحداث المنحرفين الذين تأمر محكمة الأحداث بحبسهم أو بإيداعهم بها.

[7] ويمكن الإشارة هنا إلى المادة (8) من القانون رقم (1) لسنة 1994 بشأن الأحداث والتي تنص إلى أنه إذا ارتكب الحدث جناية أو جنحة، فلا يجوز الحكم عليه بالعقوبات أو التدابير المقررة لتلك الجرائم، فيما عدا المصادرة أو إغلاق المحل، ويحكم عليه بأحد التدابير الآتية:

(أ) التوبيخ؛

(ب) التسليم؛

(ج) الإلحاق بالتدريب المهني؛

(د) الإلزام بواجبات معينة؛

(هـ) الاختبار القضائي؛

58. In accordance with article 14 of the Juveniles Act, when a minor is admitted to a specialized reform centre for the welfare and correction of juveniles, the centre is required to submit biannual reports to the court on the juvenile's situation and behaviour so that the court may determine the appropriate action. A juvenile may not be placed in such a facility for more than 10 years for serious offences and 5 years for lesser offences. Juveniles with disabilities are admitted to an appropriate institution for their rehabilitation. Minors may only remain in reform centres until the age of 18 years, whereupon they are transferred to prison to serve their sentences.

59. With regard to the separation of juveniles from adults, Act No. 3 of 2009 regulating penitentiary and reform institutions requires adult prisoners to be separated from prisoners under the age of 18 years. Article 5 requires specific areas to be allocated to juveniles in prisons and reform institutions, while article 24 classifies prisoners into categories, divided into age groups. The competent authorities are responsible for the protection and for the physical and psychological integrity of prisoners, for their educational, health and social welfare and for establishing the appropriate conditions for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, taking into account their needs, their human dignity, their age and their sex. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring the safe return of prisoners, in cooperation with their countries of origin or the authorities of the countries of which they are permanent residents. It should be noted that the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children has conducted a number of skills training courses for security sector personnel (officers and investigators) of various ranks on dealing with cases of abuse and violence against children or women.

Strengthening the family

60. Qatar has continued its efforts to strengthen the family and family values and has taken numerous steps and measures to strengthen the family and family values since the issuance of Amiri Decree No. 53 of 1998, which reflects the Government's concern from an early stage to establish a supreme national authority responsible for the family and its future needs and aspirations. This concern was given substance by Amiri Decree No. 15 of 2009 on the organization of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, in accordance with the overall vision for development contained in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which stipulates that the Council shall report directly to the Amir. As the supreme authority responsible for all matters relating to the family, the Council aims to enhance the status and strengthen the role of the family in society, to promote the family and family members, to ensure that the family remains a strong and cohesive unit that cares for children and upholds moral and religious values and ideals. In order to do so, it has at its disposal all the necessary powers and authority to develop strategies, policies and programmes for improving the quality of life for the family and family members, ensuring that they have social security and stability. Moreover, the Council seeks to achieve the goals set out in international instruments that deal with family matters. It follows up on the implementation of international conventions concerned with family matters and the rights of children, women, and persons with disabilities to which Qatar is a party and consults on draft agreements on the protection of the family and family members. It endeavours to empower women, to enable them to participate in economic and political life, particularly in decision-making, to increase employment opportunities for them and to support them in their professional lives. It proposes draft legislative tools relevant to the family and its members. In addition, the Council cooperates with international and regional bodies and organizations

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(و) الإيداع في إحدى الدور المخصصة للإعداد الاجتماعي؛

(ز) الإيداع في مؤسسة صحية.

concerned with family and its members and represents Qatar in regional and international conferences and committees on the family, children, women and persons with disabilities. Moreover, it holds conferences, seminars and panel discussions and conducts research on topics pertaining to the family.

The Council attaches considerable importance to coordination and cooperation with all government agencies and to the support and participation of civil society organizations. It gives particular attention to volunteer work and encourages the participation of the private sector, with effective contribution from target groups, namely, the family, children, women, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

61. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs has taken a number of measures in the context of Qatar's national obligations under the international human rights conventions to which it is a party. Since the submission of the initial report, the Council has established a number of institutions for the family, children, women, persons with disabilities and the elderly and has implemented numerous activities and programmes including, by way of example, the following:

- Implementation by the Council of an annual programme bringing together experts and others concerned with issues related to the family at which the problems and challenges facing the family in Qatar are addressed. The first meeting, entitled "Curbing divorce in Qatar: policy proposals", was held in April 2011 and was followed by the second meeting of experts, entitled "Family counselling services in Qatar: challenges and goals", in April 2012. The third meeting, entitled "Towards achieving work-life balance for women", was held in April 2013;
- Celebration of National Family Day on 15 April every year, as established by the Council of Ministers at its first ordinary session on 5 January 2011. Numerous meetings and seminars are held to mark the day at which issues pertaining to the family and family counselling services are discussed, in addition to social phenomena relating to the family;
- Preparation of a Family Database Indicators Manual for 2009, with a view to establishing a scientific, statistical point of reference for all data users, decision makers and policymakers to enable them to recognize the importance of indicators, the contexts in which they are used and how to utilize them in studies and research and monitor progress in categories of interest;
- Preparation of a guide for welfare and protection service providers in order to enhance the role of the family, to protect the family and to empower individual family members by means of access to those services, and also to enhance the role of service providers by highlighting the services and the activities that they offer;
- Publication in 2013 by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Family Counselling Centre, the Qatari Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children (Al-Aman), the Social Rehabilitation Centre (Al-`Uwayn), the Qatari Foundation for the Elderly (Al-Ihsan), the Shafallah Centre for Children with Special Needs and the Cultural Centre for Childhood of a report, entitled "The family from the perspective of social protection and welfare institutions". The report reviews and assesses the situation of families in particular circumstances (such as families caring for the elderly or the young or for persons with disabilities, low-income families, family members from broken homes and victims of domestic violence) and other categories targeted by welfare and social protection programmes in terms of the services provided to them. In addition, the report highlights the need to develop policies, to lobby and to develop relevant statistics and indicators to keep pace with policymaking and planning needs. The report is aimed at decision makers and programme planners

working in government agencies, civil society institutions, universities and scientific research centres, regional and international organizations, the media and interested members of the community.

62. With regard to national strategies, the Qatar National Vision 2030 includes the following social pillars:

- **Family cohesion**

  The Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to build a society that promotes justice and equality. It embodies the principles enshrined in the permanent Constitution, which protects public and private freedoms, promotes moral and religious values as well as customs, traditions and cultural identity and guarantees security, stability and equality of opportunity.[8]

- **Sectoral strategy to promote family cohesion and the empowerment of women**

  This strategy, which forms part of the National Development Strategy 2011–2016, identifies eight development objectives in three principal thematic areas, namely, family cohesion, welfare and the empowerment of women, as a means of achieving the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030. The desired results will be achieved through 12 linked projects.[9]

Promotion and protection of the rights of the child

63. In connection with the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child contained in paragraph 65 of document CRC/C/QAT/CO/12, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, as the supreme authority responsible for issues relating to the family, including child welfare, and everything relating to the coordination of

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[8] وتضع رؤية قطر الوطنية 2030 عدة أهداف للتماسك الأسري وتمكين المرأة، تتضمن:

- الأسر القوية المتماسكة التي تهتم بأفرادها، وتحافظ على القيم الدينية والأخلاقية والمثل الإنسانية العليا؛
- المحافظة على أسرة متماسكة قوية ترعى أبناءها وتلتزم بالقيم الأخلاقية والدينية والمثل العليا؛
- تطوير بنية اجتماعية سليمة مع بناء مؤسسات عامة فعالة ومنظمات مجتمع مدني نشطة وقوية؛
- بناء نظام فعال للحماية الاجتماعية لجميع القطريين، يرعى حقوقهم المدنية ويثمّن مشاركتهم الفعالة في تطوير المجتمع ويؤمن لهم دخلا كافيا للمحافظة على الكرامة والصحة؛
- تعزيز قدرات المرأة وتمكينها من المشاركة الاقتصادية والسياسية، خاصة تلك المتعلقة بصناعة القرار.

[9] تتمثل أهداف تلك المشاريع في:

- تعزيز دور الأسرة القطرية كركيزة المجتمع الأساسية؛
- زيادة مسؤولية الوالدين والتقليل من الاعتماد على عاملات المنازل؛
- خفض معدلات العنف الأسري وإنشاء نظام حماية ودعم للضحايا؛
- تقديم أنظمة دعم للأسر ذات الأوضاع الخاصة، كأسر المعاقين والأحداث المنحرفين؛
- خفض درجة تعرض الأسر القطرية للمخاطر الاقتصادية والاجتماعية وتحسين عملية إدارة شؤونها المالية؛
- صحة ورفاهة الأطفال وحمايتهم؛
- زيادة الدعم للأسر العاملة وخصوصا للنساء؛
- زيادة عدد النساء في المناصب القيادية ومراكز صنع القرارات السياسية؛
- التقليل من الصورة النمطية السائدة عن أدوار المرأة ومسؤولياتها.

efforts with regard to development policies, measures and programmes relating to children's rights, is also responsible for follow up to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In cooperation with the competent authorities, the Council endeavours to respond fully to the observations made by the Committee in national strategies and plans relating to children. Moreover, it publishes the national reports that it submits to the Committee as well as the Committee's concluding observations on its website and disseminates the latter to the national authorities responsible for children so that they can implement the Committee's recommendations in their annual programmes and activities.

The competent committee has reviewed the Children's Bill and the legislative steps established by law are currently being taken with a view to its enactment. The bill offers greater protection to children as it provides for the establishment of a special juvenile police force and a juvenile prosecution service, in addition to a juvenile court of first instance and a juvenile court of appeal.

64. Policies and training programmes relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child continue to be improved. In addition to the developments in awareness-raising reviewed above, the Government has taken various measures relating to the child, including, for example, by establishing a unit that deals with the rights of children, women and persons with disabilities in the National Human Rights Committee, pursuant to the Chairperson's decision No. 16 of 2010 on the establishment of legal units within the Committee. The unit is responsible for examining reports and complaints and appeals relating to violence against women, the rights of the child and the disability rights.

At the Arab level, Qatar, represented by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, hosted the seventeenth session of the Arab Childhood Committee from 24 to 27 October 2011. During the course of the session, issues relating to children in the Arab world were discussed, in addition to their connection with international conventions and the protection strategies and mechanisms required for children in the Arab States.

65. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs has taken the lead in raising awareness of children's rights and has contributed to raising awareness of the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure. The Council organized a workshop entitled "The Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child", held in Doha from 3 to 5 June 2012, in cooperation with the Family and Child Department in the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, the Regional Office of UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on violence against children, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and Save the Children Sweden. Moreover, celebrations are held every year to mark international and regional children's days, such as Arab Children's Day and International Children's Day.

The national strategy for family cohesion includes a project entitled "Development of measures to promote children's rights and protect children's interests".[10]

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[10] اشتمل المشروع على عدد من الأنشطة منها:

- تطوير الإجراءات الخاصة لصالح الطفل والتي ترصد رفاهه وحقوقه؛
- تبني معايير المصلحة الفضلى في مجالات حماية الطفل؛
- تطوير نظام قضائي للأطفال؛

Action against domestic violence

66. In the context of strengthening the legal measures aimed at combating domestic violence, sexual assault and the exploitation of women and children and ensuring that those measures are implemented effectively, Qatar has adopted various legislative, policy and strategic measures and steps, including:

- **With regard to legislation**, for example, the Criminal Code and the legislation amending the Code contain penalties for offences that fall within the category of violence against women and children, including offences against honour, indecent acts and indecent assault, acts harmful to children, murder, abuse, abortion and abduction;
- The Human Trafficking Act includes harsh penalties for forms of human trafficking of which the victims are women and children, as these offences involve the most serious forms of violence against women and children such as the use of means of coercion or threat to exploit women and children in prostitution or forced labour;
- In the context of the legislative review, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs established a committee, chaired by the Council and with members drawn from the competent national authorities, to review the national legislation on domestic violence;
- Moreover the Supreme Council for Family Affairs established and presides over a team, whose members are drawn from other competent authorities, which is responsible for developing statistics on domestic violence;
- **Strategies and national plans** have included goals to strengthen services provided to the family, women and children with a view to protecting them against violence. The Strategic Plan for the Family 2011–2016 includes a goal relating to the protection of women from all forms of exploitation and violence, and the strategic implementation plan that was adopted includes a series of specific programmes and measures for the implementation of that goal through government and non-governmental agencies.[11]

- ترقية الحوار وتشجيعه بين الأجيال من خلال برامج توعوية واستشارية بشأن رفاه الطفل؛
- دعم وتشجيع الأطفال ليكونوا مواطنين فاعلين مؤمنين بالأفكار الديمقراطية والحس بالمسؤولية والقيادة.

[11] ومن تلك المشاريع والبرامج:

- مشروع تمكين المرأة من التعامل بإيجابية مع العنف الواقع عليها؛
- مشروع توفير الحماية للنساء المعنفات؛
- مشروع تسهيل الوصول إلى آليات الحماية من العنف؛
- برامج توعوية للنساء بحقوقهن التي يكفلها القانون ونشر الثقافة القانونية؛
- برنامج الاحتفال باليوم العالمي لمناهضة العنف ضد المرأة - تنفيذ حملة اوقفوا الصمت لمناهضة الإساءة الجنسية ضد النساء؛
- برنامج ودورات تدريبية للأسرة عن طرق مواجهة المشاكل الأسرية وبدائل استخدام العنف؛
- برنامج الوقاية من العنف والإساءة والممارسات المنحرفة؛
- برنامج مبادرة الشراكة المجتمعية لمكافحة العنف الأسري؛
- برنامج توفير برامج توعية للمعنفين حول كيفية الاستفادة من آليات الحماية المتوفرة؛

67. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs and its strategic partners have followed up on these measures by stepping up efforts to strengthen cooperation and partnership in order to boost the strategic implementation plan, and by creating strong links between the Council's programmes and projects and components of the family cohesion and empowerment of women 2011–2016 sector under the aforementioned National Development Strategy 2011–2016. In addition, the Council has established projects and activities on protection against domestic violence, victim protection mechanisms and a project to develop an early detection mechanism for use in schools with a view to protecting children from violence. Moreover, it has established a project to develop measures to promote children's rights and protect their interests. The Council prepares and issues periodic reports on monitoring and follow-up to the implementation of activities and the outcomes of the implementation plan for the sector in the context of the National Development Strategy 2011–2016, including outcomes relating to children's and women's rights.

68. With regard to violence in schools, the Supreme Education Council has endeavoured to provide all precautions and measures to ensure the security and safety of students, at home and at school. To that end, it has provided a number of training courses for social workers and psychologists in coordination with the competent authorities, such as the Department of Social Protection in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children, the Social Rehabilitation Centre (Al-Uwayn) and the Family Counselling Centre, on proper methods of detection and how to tackle and report on cases of violence in schools. Since 2009, a number of training courses have been provided, initially by support institutions under contract to the Council and subsequently by independent schools, in accordance with the approved plan for development. The Higher Education Council continues its efforts to promote the best measures.

69. In addition, a programme to disseminate a culture of children's rights has been implemented at various stages of education with a view to raising awareness of children's rights and providing protection against violence between students in schools, encouraging them to assume a role in mitigating the negative impacts and consequences of violence and abuse in their community. At the same time, the programme seeks to empower teaching staff to detect forms of abuse and delinquency by raising the awareness and upgrading the skills of social workers and teachers to deal with cases of violence and abuse against children. The programme has included field visits to independent, private and community schools and consists of lectures on various aspects of protection (social, health, psychological and legal) and on reporting and complaints mechanisms for violations.

70. In addition, the Juvenile Police Department in the Ministry of the Interior, in coordination with government agencies and civil society organizations, has developed a strategy to protect children from harmful information and material such as violence and pornography. It issues posters, educational brochures and pamphlets on this topic, with a view to protecting children. Moreover, it conducts field studies in order to identify the

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- برنامج الحملة الإعلامية عن خط المساندة (919)؛
- برنامج ودورات تدريبية للعاملين بالخدمات الصحية على الاكتشاف والتعامل مع حالات الإساءة والعنف والإهمال الواقعة على الطفل والمرأة؛
- برنامج ودراسة إنشاء المركز الشامل لحماية المرأة لضمان خصوصية في نظر الحالات وسرعة البت في القضايا؛
- برنامج ودورات الإرشاد الأسري ودورات فن الاستماع لضحايا العنف الأسري.

number of cases and ways of tackling them; it holds training workshops and lectures to raise awareness among children and their parents at different schools in order to enlist the family's cooperation in reducing children's exposure to such abuse and protecting them; and, also, contributes to radio and television programmes geared towards child protection.

With regard to awareness-raising programmes and activities for parents on methods of educating and protecting children, the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children has published a manual on the detection of abuse (violence and neglect) involving children and women. The manual focuses on the detection of abuse, on the reporting and complaints mechanism and on tackling abuse, in addition to rehabilitation and reintegration.[12]

Promoting disability rights

71. Qatar continues to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities and has taken the following measures:

- Preparation of a bill amending various provisions of the Persons with Special Needs Act (Act No. 2 of 2004);
- Preparation of draft Council of Ministers decrees on education, health care, employment, housing creation, public and private services and sports for persons with disabilities;
- Preparation by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs of a draft manual on planning and regulatory standards pertaining to persons with disabilities;
- Organization of numerous activities, such as sessions, workshops and seminars on persons with disabilities, in implementation of the joint memorandum of understanding signed in 2010 by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the National Human Rights Committee.[13]

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[12] وفضلاً عن المعلومات الواردة في هذا التقرير بخصوص الجهود التي تقوم بها المؤسسة القطرية لحماية الطفل والمرأة في مجال وقاية الأطفال وحمايتهم من كل مظاهر العنف وإساءة المعاملة والاستغلال تجدر الإشارة إلى ما تضمنته الاستراتيجية التنفيذية للمؤسسة القطرية لحماية الطفل والمرأة (2009-2012) في محور الوقاية من العنف والإساءة والممارسات المنحرفة من محاور ترجمت إلى حزمة من البرامج التوعوية والتثقيفية (كـ "حملة أوقفوا الصمت" وحملة "مكافحة العنف ضد المعاق") وإعداد المطبوعات ودليل استرشادي لكيفية اكتشاف حالات الإساءة والعنف، إضافة إلى الزيارات التعريفية والميدانية لطلبة المدارس، والبرامج التأهيلية العلاجية السنوية (كبرنامج العلاج وإعادة التأهيل النفسي والاجتماعي "غير حياتك").

[13] شملت هذه الفعاليات على سبيل المثال:

- ورشة عمل حول "أوجه العلاقة بين اتفاقية حقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة واتفاقية حقوق الطفل". بهدف مناقشة المعوقات والإشكاليات التي تواجه الأطفال المعاقين وأسرهم والتعرف على أوجه العلاقة بين اتفاقية حقوق الطفل واتفاقية حقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة.
- دورة تدريبية حول "حقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة في تكوين الأسرة بين الاتفاقية والواقع". بهدف مناقشة المعوقات والإشكاليات التي تواجه الأطفال المعاقين وأسرهم والتعرف على أوجه العلاقة بين اتفاقية حقوق الطفل واتفاقية حقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة.
- ندوة حول "الإعلام وقضايا الأشخاص ذوي الاعاقة". بمشاركة وسائل الاعلام والإعلاميين والأشخاص المعاقين ومؤسساتهم والمنظمات والمؤسسات العاملة في المجال الاجتماعي ومنظمات حقوق الإنسان ووزارات الإعلام العربي والباحثين والمهتمين.

72. The Department of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs participates in the implementation of strategies, plans and policies relating to persons with disabilities and elderly persons, as well as in the development and implementation of care and rehabilitation programmes for these groups. In addition, it raises awareness and educates the community about the rights of these groups and organizes training programmes for people who work with them, in addition to seminars, conferences and workshops to discuss issues relating to them, in cooperation with the relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions. Since the submission of the initial report, the programmes and projects implemented by the Department in connection with persons with disabilities include:

- A programme for the employment of persons with disabilities: this programme aims to employ persons with disabilities through establishing communication channels with the relevant national authorities, providing persons with disabilities with further training that will prepare them for work and following up on them after they find employment;
- Establishment of a national database on persons with disabilities and the elderly;[14]
- Conducting awareness campaigns on the role of car accidents in the incidence of disability (2009–2012);[15]
- Celebration of the Arab and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities;[16]
- Awareness workshops on the Human Resources Management Act (Act No. 8 of 2009) to inform persons with disabilities of their rights in the workplace;
- Elections awareness workshop for persons with disabilities to inform them of their rights as voters and as candidates;
- Workshop on "The art of dealing with persons with disabilities 2012–2013", to raise awareness and convey an academically correct pedagogical message on this topic with a view to facilitating the involvement of persons with disabilities with the community and their integration into society;
- "Spare a minute?", a media programme enabling the voice of persons with disabilities to be heard through a weekly article or column in local newspapers. The aim of the programme is to encourage persons with disabilities to participate in the media and highlight disability issues;
- A forum on the integration and empowerment of persons with disabilities, in order to highlight the services provided to persons with disabilities in Qatar by different centres, associations and institutions and to raise awareness in the community of the capabilities and needs of this group, as well as to inform parents of persons with disabilities of the services available through an exhibition organized on the sidelines of the forum, in addition to various workshops, lectures and seminars, over a period of three days. The forum is intended for persons with disabilities at all schools, their parents, additional educational support staff and teaching staff. The forum is linked to the project to develop and expand an extensive database to match jobseekers with

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[14] وتهدف إلى توفير بيانات كاملة عن الأشخاص المعاقين للاستعانة بها في تنفيذ القانون واتفاقية الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة بالإضافة إلى الاستفادة منها في إعداد الخطط و البرامج المستقبلية.

[15] وتهدف إلى الحد من الإصابة بالإعاقة والتوعية بدور حوادث السيارات في الإصابة بالإعاقة وذلك من خلال تنفيذها في مدارس البنين (إعدادي - ثانوي) بالإضافة إلى بعض الجامعات.

[16] يحتفل العالم في 3 كانون الأول/ديسمبر من كل عام باليوم العالمي للإعاقة، كما يحتفل العالم العربي باليوم العربي للمعاق في 13 كانون الأول/ديسمبر بهدف تعزيز وفهم قضايا الإعاقة و زيادة الوعي بحقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة.

employment opportunities that forms part of the National Development Strategy 2011–2016 (Social Protection Sector);

- Programme to support the elderly and persons with disabilities (Dimah) that aims to offer support and to provide the basic needs and requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, including medical equipment and devices.

73. The Mada Centre was established as a non-profit organization that aims to empower persons with disabilities. The Centre is a Supreme Council for Communications initiative that supports the concept of digital inclusion by connecting persons with disabilities with assistive technologies that can enhance the quality of their daily lives and help them to integrate more fully into society. Staff advise persons with disabilities visiting the Centre on the use of integrated assistive technology solutions. The Centre also holds training courses for individuals and institutions on the use of these technologies. The courses are delivered with the assistance of local and regional experts and address issues related to assistive technologies for persons with disabilities. The Centre also has a digital library with numerous specific resources on this topic. The Centre has launched a number of initiatives in order to achieve its goals.[17]

Promoting the right to education

74. Qatar has continued its efforts to ensure that all groups in society have access to education by taking a number of actions and measures. As a complement to efforts made in the field of the legislative environment, it enacted Act No. 25 of 2009, amending some provisions of the Sentences and Penalties Act in the Compulsory Education Act (Act No. 25 of 2001). Article 11, as amended, provides that those who violate the Act shall be liable to a fine ranging from a minimum of QR 5,000 to a maximum of QR 10,000. In addition, Ministerial decision No. 15 of 2010 establishing a committee to examine violations by parents under the Compulsory Education Act was issued. Article 8 includes the tasks and functions assigned to the committee, which consist of enumerating cases, studying the reasons why some parents prevent their children from attending school, taking appropriate action, identifying the role of the authorities represented in the decision and developing proposals and procedural steps for the application of the law.

75. Qatar also issued Ministerial decision No. 32 of 2013 on a conduct policy followed by Ministerial decision No. 33 of 2013 on student counselling, article 3 of which outlines the role and function of student counsellors. Counsellors are responsible for supervising students in schools in the light of the applicable conduct policy, for educating and orienting students, their parents and the school system in general of the rules of conduct, for making case studies of student conduct and developing solutions, in addition to cooperating and communicating with the relevant authorities.

76. The Supreme Education Council has continued its efforts to develop childcare and welfare through early education as a fundamental part of the education process, with

[17] من أهم تلك المبادرات:

- مبادرة "تواصل بدون إعاقة" بالتعاون مع شركات الاتصالات بالدولة، والتي تهدف إلى ربط المعاقين بتكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات، بالإضافة إلى ضمان ألا تزيد التكلفة للاستفادة من تكنولوجيا المعلومات للأشخاص المعاقين عن غيرهم بسبب احتياجاتهم الخاصة؛
- مبادرة لتوفير كتب الكترونية للأشخاص المعاقين في الدولة وذلك بالتعاون مع الموقع الإلكتروني "bookshare"، حيث تعد هذه المبادرة الأولى من نوعها في منطقة الخليج العربي بهدف توفير كتب إلكترونية باللغة الانكليزية للمعاقين.

kindergarten as a step on the educational ladder. It has taken various steps including opening more public kindergartens; there are currently 49 public kindergartens, fully furnished and equipped with learning resources, educational games and indoor and outdoor play areas. The Council also encourages the private sector to invest in this stage of education by offering the possibility of opening private kindergartens, the quality of which is ensured in accordance with a set of standards and requirements relating to buildings and education plans.

77. Moreover, the Council has adopted a number of different measures to increase primary enrolment rates, although Qatar does not have a problem with gross and net enrolment rates in view of the fact that in 2011, the overall primary enrolment rate was 99.3 per cent. The measures adopted include the establishment of a committee to monitor the implementation of the Compulsory Education Act and the opening of more public and private schools. In addition, the national Education and Training Sector Strategy 2011–2016 includes several programmes in this regard.[18]

78. With regard to the prohibition of all forms of corporal punishment against children, a series of measures has been adopted with a view to preventing corporal punishment and violence in schools and preserving children's dignity. These include the publication of a policy on conduct for schools. The policy consists of five articles outlining the objectives of the policy, the roles, responsibilities and duties of the various stakeholders (school, teacher, social worker, psychologist, conduct committee, student counselling office, students), and an analysis of student conduct, violations, preventive and disciplinary measures and truancy. It focuses on the reinforcement of positive behaviour and on preventive measures, emphasizing the importance of self-discipline for students.

It promotes educational values and absolute confidentiality in dealing with all cases, taking into account justice and equal treatment among students and avoids the use of non-pedagogical methods, including all forms of physical and psychological abuse, to address misconduct.

79. In addition, social workers conduct awareness and education programmes that contribute to raising awareness with regard to the prohibition of corporal punishment and mechanisms for dealing with cases of violence. A series of training courses was organized, targeting principals, teachers and administrators in order to familiarize them with the characteristics and psychological needs of different age groups at every stage of education. Moreover, social workers participate on an annual basis in training programmes organized by human rights institutions in Qatar, such as the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children, which deal with cases of violence among students and means of tackling them.

80. Tireless efforts and practical steps continue in order to disseminate a culture of human rights in educational institutions, including through the media. In addition to the

[18] تهدف هذه البرامج إلى التوسع في استيعاب الطلبة في التعليم، وافتتاح مجموعة من المدارس للتعليم الموازي لمن هم فوق سن التعليم للمراحل التعليمية المختلفة، ودعم الطلبة المعاقين ودمجهم في المدارس المستقلة وتوفير الفريق المناسب لرعايتهم وتقديم تعليم مناسب لهم، وتطوير نظام الكتروني لتتبع الطلبة لضمان استمراريتهم في النظام التعليمي، وتطوير أساليب التعليم المتبعة في المدارس من خلال توظيف التكنولوجيا الحديثة مثل الحقيبة الالكترونية، وتقديم جهاز كمبيوتر لوحي (أيباد) لكل طالب والسبورة الذكية، وتطوير مصادر التعليم بإعداد كتب دراسية وطنية موحدة لجميع المدارس، وتشكيل لجنة بكل مدرسة للضبط السلوكي، وتقويم سلوك الطلبة، ووضع الخطط العلاجية بالتعاون مع المؤسسات الداعمة ومنها المؤسسة القطرية لحماية الطفل والمرأة.

measures outlined in the third section of the report, the measures taken include the following:

- Integration of human rights concepts and principles in textbooks;
- Preparation of human rights teaching manuals for the three stages of education;
- Strengthening the role of associations and student councils, such as Friends of the Elderly, Friends of Child Protection, the Human Rights Association and student councils in all schools;
- Preparation of a series of publications such as "I have rights" and a colouring book "I have the right";
- Organization of extracurricular activities to strengthen the dissemination of a culture of human rights and concepts.

Promoting migrant workers' rights

81. Qatar has continued its efforts to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has taken the following steps and legislative and procedural measures:

- Implementation of a project to improve recruitment and retention conditions for migrant workers and another project to improve labour market legislation and develop institutional capacities;
- Adoption of measures and legislative procedures requiring employers to ensure migrant workers the minimum rights established under the Labour Act and the relevant ministerial decisions;
- Establishment of employers' obligation to pay migrant workers' wages in a timely manner and imposition of administrative penalties for enterprises that fail to comply, up to and including the automatic shutdown of their operations;
- Conduct of periodic unannounced inspections of all enterprises subject to the provisions of the Labour Act and review of their records in order to ensure that workers are receiving the remuneration due to them;
- Development of the internal organization of inspections pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 35 of 2009, on the basis of which an inspection agency was established in the Department of Labour Inspection comprising the Department of Labour Inspection and the Department of Occupational Health and Safety and inspection visits to enterprises were expanded. In 2012, 62,446 periodic unannounced visits or visits following a complaint or for reinspection were conducted;
- Establishment of a guidance and counselling team in October 2012 with the aim of informing workers of their rights and duties as established by law, advising them on employment contracts and providing guidance on how to communicate with employers and the Ministry;
- Creation of three labour affairs directorates within the Department of Labour, namely, the Labour Relations Directorate, the Inspections Directorate and the Employment Directorate, which are responsible for protecting workers' rights;
- Establishment of a hotline to respond to migrant workers' complaints;
- Establishment of a special office of the Ministry in the court for the purpose of monitoring the dates of hearings in coordination with the Department of Labour Relations and providing simultaneous interpretation.

82. In addition to the aforementioned measures and procedures to protect workers' rights, Qatar has adopted a number of procedures with a view to protecting female domestic workers in particular, including:

- Establishment of a working group from the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior responsible for the ongoing coordination of foreign and domestic workers' affairs and exploration of how best to protect their rights;
- Verification of domestic workers' employment contracts by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in order to guarantee the rights set forth therein. The Ministry monitors the activities of employment offices importing domestic labour from abroad and conducts periodic unannounced visits in order to verify that they are not being exploited and that their rights are safeguarded. These visits have resulted in the closure of a number of offices for violations.

Reform of the sponsorship system

83. Act No. 4 of 2009 on the entry, exit, residence and sponsorship of migrants authorizes the transfer of sponsorship in a number of cases, including abuse, which further protects the rights of migrant workers. Under article 22, the competent authority in the Ministry of the Interior may transfer a worker's sponsorship to another employer by written agreement between the new employer and the former employer – subject, in the case of workers to whom the Labour Code applies, to the approval of the competent authority in the Ministry of Labour. Under article 12, sponsorship of a migrant worker may be transferred without the sponsor's consent in certain cases, in order to protect the worker's rights. The Minister of the Interior or his representative may transfer the sponsorship of migrant workers to whom the Labour Code does not apply to another employer in cases where abuse by the sponsor has been established or where doing so is in the public interest. Sponsorship of a worker to whom the Labour Code applies may be transferred to another employer at the worker's request for the same reasons, with the approval of the Minister of the Interior or his representative and with the approval of the Ministry of Labour. Article 52 of the Code prescribes a fine of QR 10,000 for violation of the provisions of article 9, which requires employers not to withhold the passports of workers and to hand over their documents once residency procedures are completed, so enhancing the legal protection of migrant workers.

Action against human trafficking

84. Through the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking, Qatar has endeavoured to implement and invigorate the recommended guidelines on human rights and trafficking in persons, in the framework of the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the National Plan 2010–2015. In that context, a number of projects and programmes have been implemented, including:

- Strengthening of cooperation on action against trafficking in persons in the Gulf region by implementing a comprehensive security strategy for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf;
- Building the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice officials in the field of combating trafficking through training workshops at the Police Training Institute and the Centre of Legal and Judicial Studies;
- Provision of shelter and protection to victims of trafficking through the Foundation's Qatari Shelter and Humanitarian Welfare Home;
- Attention given to the aspects of research and analysis, the establishment of a database and statistical data on the situation with regard to action against human

trafficking and the exchange of experiences and information in this regard with the competent authorities in Qatar (government bodies and civil society organizations).

85. Furthermore, Qatar has taken vital legislative measures in this regard, as follows:

- Consolidation of the national anti-trafficking legislation through the enactment of a law criminalizing all practices covered by the definition of human trafficking contained in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, containing provisions relating to victim and witness protection;
- Institution of a legal and procedural system to monitor human trafficking and illegal immigration offences;
- Continued efforts to avoid impunity for human traffickers and to apply the principle that victims should not be criminalized. It has established an integrated criminal security system responsible for the prevention, control and detection of human trafficking offences and for the punishment of perpetrators, for general and particular deterrent purposes, which guarantees that human trafficking will be tackled and reduced, and that perpetrators will not go unpunished or evade criminal and civil liability;
- National efforts to step up action against human trafficking have led to the implementation and application of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking 2010–2015, which contains a series of legislative, awareness-raising, research and capacity-building measures;[19]
- In order to strengthen and contribute to international cooperation against human trafficking, Qatar launched the Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Countries. The Government of Qatar has assumed all costs of the US$ 6 million initiative, which is being implemented in

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[19] من أهم تلك التدابير:

- إصدار قانون مكافحة الإتجار بالبشر رقم (15) لسنة 2011؛
- تطوير عمل الدار القطرية للإيواء والرعاية الإنسانية بما يتماشى مع المعايير العالمية بشأن دور الإيواء؛
- القيام بحملات توعية شاملة ومنظمة شملت جميع شرائح المجتمع القطري مستعينة بمختلف الوسائل والأساليب الإعلامية (مرئية، مسموعة، مكتوبة) والتي تؤسس لثقافة مجتمعية مناهضة للاتجار بالبشر؛
- تنظيم منتدى الدوحة التأسيسي لإعلان المبادرة العربية لبناء القدرات الوطنية لمكافحة الإتجار بالبشر بالدول العربية في الفترة من 22-23 مارس 2010؛
- إعداد الدراسات الوصفية التحليلية والميدانية حول العمالة المنزلية، وأثر شبكات الإنترنت في زيادة معدلات جرائم الإتجار بالبشر، وغيرها؛
- عقد العديد من المؤتمرات والمنتديات والندوات والحلقات النقاشية والموائد المستديرة على النطاق الوطني بشأن مواجهة جرائم الإتجار بالبشر؛
- إعداد دليل إرشادي للتعرّف على ضحايا الإتجار بالبشر وتقديم المساعدة والحماية لهم، وتأتي أهمية هذا الدليل في تحديد الخطوات اللازمة للعاملين المتصلين بضحايا الإتجار بالبشر من القائمين على إنفاذ القانون ومقدّمي الرعاية الطبية والنفسية والاجتماعية.

partnership with the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the League of Arab States;[20]

- As part of training on international standards to combat human trafficking, the Qatar Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking, in cooperation with the Faculty of Law, holds an annual educational and training programme in the University of Qatar, known as the Legal Clinic. The programme comprises a series of lectures on the Human Trafficking Act, practical training sessions on skills for supporting victims of human trafficking, field visits to the authorities concerned and training workshops;
- The Foundation continued its rehabilitation efforts and programmes for victims of trafficking.[21]

The right to health

86. A number of laws, decisions and measures have been issued as a complement to Qatar's efforts to promote the right to health, as follows:

- Amiri Decree No. 7 of 2013 establishing the Qatari Council for Medical Specializations;
- Amiri Decree No. 15 of 2012 establishing the Primary Health Care Corporation;
- Amiri Decree No. 80 of 2011 designating the second Tuesday of February as annual national sports day, with paid leave. On this occasion, ministries, government agencies, public bodies and institutions organize sporting and mobility events involving employees and associates, appropriate for their status and age, in order to raise awareness of the importance and role of sport in the lives of individuals and communities;

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[20] وتهدف هذه المبادرة إلى بناء القدرات الوطنية للقيادات العاملة في مختلف مجالات مكافحة الإتجار بالبشر بالمنطقة العربية (ومنهم الموظفين المسؤولين عن إنفاذ القوانين في أجهزة ونظم العدالة الجنائية، والملاحقة القضائية، والنيابة العامة، والهجرة والجوازات والمنافذ الحدودية، والتعاون الدولي، وإدارة العمل واستقدام العمالة، والمسؤولين عن مراكز ودور الإيواء والرعاية الإنسانية لضحايا الإتجار بالبشر، والمسؤولين في مؤسسات المجتمع المدني)، والتعرف على هوية الضحايا ومعالجة أوضاعهم وإعادتهم لأوطانهم أو إعادة تأهيلهم وتقديم الحماية والرعاية والمساعدة اللازمة لهم، وأساليب التحقيق والتعامل الإنساني مع الضحايا، مع مراعاة نوع الجنس والاحتياجات الخاصة للجماعات المستهدفة مثل النساء والأطفال.

[21] وفي هذا الإطار قامت المؤسسة بالعديد من الإنجازات في الجانب التأهيلي لضحايا جرائم الإتجار بالبشر، وذلك من خلال:

- إيواء ضحايا الإتجار بالدار القطرية للإيواء والرعاية الإنسانية التابعة للمؤسسة؛
- تقديم الدعم الطبي والنفسي والتربوي والقانوني والمأوى، وتوفير كافة الرعاية الصحية لهم، وذلك من أجل إعادته تعافيهم وانخراطهم في المجتمع؛
- إعداد الكوادر اللازمة للمتعاملين مع ضحايا الإتجار وبخاصة الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين والنفسيين وذلك من خلال دورات فن التعامل مع الضحايا من الأطفال؛
- تتخذ المؤسسة التدابير اللازمة لحماية حقوق ومصالح الأشخاص المتاجر بهم وكانوا ضحايا الاستغلال الجنسي في جميع مراحل الإجراءات الجنائية المتخذة ضد الجناة، فضلا عن قيام المؤسسة بتوفير محامين لرفع دعاوى تعويض لهم.

- Act No. 7 of 2013 on the social and health insurance system and its implementing regulations;
- Awareness campaigns on a number of world health days dedicated to various diseases[22] have been conducted in public places such as shopping malls, schools, universities and health centres;
- Educational and training workshops, lectures and seminars have been held, targeting different groups in the community such as children, physicians and teachers.

D. Training, capacity-building and awareness-raising

87. In addition to the information relating to training, capacity-building and awareness-raising mentioned above in part III of the report, when tackling a number of the recommendations in part IV of the report we would like to add the following:

- Training of public sector employees and the development of human resources in the field of protection for women and children is the primary focus of the work of the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children. Programmes are organized on a continuing, periodic basis in order to increase staff capacity to provide excellent and effective services;
- The Supreme Council for Family Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Human Rights Committee on 4 February 2010 with a view to raising awareness of international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities through events and media campaigns;
- The Supreme Education Council and the National Human Rights Committee signed a memorandum of cooperation on the implementation of the Arab Plan for Human Rights Education. These bodies play an important role in the dissemination of a culture of human rights and desire to give impetus to the Plan, which was adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States. Human rights education has an impact on the establishment, dissemination, promotion and protection of human rights and Qatar desires to meet its fundamental obligations at international, regional and local levels;
- The Diplomatic Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a number of introductory programmes on diplomacy and international affairs for Ministry employees, as part of the Ministry's annual plan.

IV. Future challenges and perspectives

88. While Qatar has witnessed numerous developments with regard to the promotion and protection of human rights in terms of legislation, institutions and awareness, it is going through a distinctive phase in its history and pressing rapidly towards complete and comprehensive development. As a result, Qatar has recorded unprecedented rates of growth and economic recovery. Qatar was given a prestigious first rank among the countries of North Africa and the Middle East and was ranked 18th on the global scale by the World Economic Forum in the *Human Capital Report 2013*. It should be noted that 122 countries

[22] كحملة اليوم العالمي التوعوي بمرض السرطان، والأسبوع الخليجي الموحد لتعزيز صحة الفم والأسنان، واليوم العالمي للجلوكوما، ويوم القلب العالمي، واليوم العالمي للإبصار.

were covered by the 2013 report, which centred on four main pillars including health, education, employment and enabling environment.

89. The attention paid to human rights extends beyond the field of legislation to include building institutions, strategies, policies and programmes that seek to translate the human rights protections afforded by the law into reality. Consequently, numerous institutions have been established to promote and protect human rights as a comprehensive and indivisible concept.

90. That point was emphasized in the overall vision for development (Qatar National Vision 2030), which incorporates important themes affecting human rights in the areas of education, health, environment, migrant workers' rights, women's empowerment and the rights of the child. It was also emphasized in the National Development Strategy 2011–2016, which aims to transform the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030 into reality and outlines in practical terms progress on the economic, social, cultural, humanitarian and environmental fronts in the coming years.

91. Although there have been palpable developments in Qatar in terms of legislation, institutions and awareness, and although the political will exists and the material resources are available, some temporary obstacles remain. These include the large and unprecedented population increase of over 100 per cent in recent years in Qatar, in addition to the fact that legislative and institutional developments are recent and that Qatar has only recently dealt with international human rights mechanisms.

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Qatar

The present report is a compilation of the information contained in the reports of treaty bodies and special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, and of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and in other relevant official United Nations documents. It is presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints. For the full text, please refer to the document referenced. The present report does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of OHCHR other than those contained in public reports and statements issued by the Office. It follows the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council in its decision 17/119. Information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes. The report has been prepared taking into consideration the periodicity of the review, and developments during that period.

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Please recycle

I. Background and framework

A. Scope of international obligations[1]

International human rights treaties[2]

	Status during previous cycle	*Action after review*	*Not ratified/not accepted*
Ratification, accession or succession	ICERD (1976)		ICESCR
	CEDAW (2009)		ICCPR
	CAT (2000)		ICCPR-OP 2
	CRC (1995)		OP-CAT
	OP-CRC-AC (2002)		ICRMW
	OP-CRC-SC (2001)		CPED
	CRPD (2008)		
Reservations, declarations and/or understandings	CEDAW (reservations, arts. 2 (a), 9 (para. 2), 15 (paras. 1 and 4), 16 (para. 1 (a), (c) and (f)), and 29, 2009; declarations, arts. 1 and 5 (a), 2009)	CAT (withdrawal of general reservation, arts. 21 and 22; reservations, arts. 1 and 16, 2012)	
	CAT (reservations, general, arts. 21 and 22, 2000)		
	CRC (reservations, arts. 2 and 14, 2009)		
Complaint procedures, inquiry and urgent action[3]	OP-CRPD (signature only, 2007)		ICERD, art. 14
	CAT, art. 20 (2000)		OP-ICESCR
			ICCPR
			ICCPR-OP 1
			OP-CEDAW
			CAT, arts. 21 and 22
			OP-CRC-IC
			ICRMW
			OP-CRPD
			CPED

Other main relevant international instruments

	Status during previous cycle	*Action after review*	*Not ratified*
Ratification, accession or succession	Palermo Protocol[4] Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocols I and II[5] ILO fundamental conventions, except Nos. 87, 98 and 100[6]		Conventions on refugees and stateless persons[7] Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court ILO fundamental conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 100[8] ILO conventions Nos. 169 and 189[9] Additional Protocol III to the 1949 Geneva Conventions[10] UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education

1. In 2012, the Committee against Torture (CAT) invited Qatar to ratify ICCPR and its Optional Protocols, ICRMW, CPED and OP-CEDAW.[11] In 2012, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) encouraged Qatar to ratify ICRMW.[12]

2. CERD recommended that Qatar ratify the amendments to article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention.[13]

3. While noting that Qatar had taken steps to withdraw its reservations to articles 21 and 22 of the Convention, CAT was concerned that the State had not yet accepted the Committee's competence under those articles. Qatar also sought to retain a vague and extremely broad reservation to articles 1 and 16 of the Convention insofar as they were incompatible with the precepts of Islamic law and the Islamic religion.[14] CAT encouraged Qatar to consider ratifying OP-CAT as soon as possible.[15]

4. CAT recommended that Qatar consider acceding to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.[16] CERD recommended that Qatar ratify the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.[17]

5. CERD recommended that Qatar ratify ILO Convention No. 189 (2011) concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.[18]

6. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that Qatar be encouraged to ratify the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.[19]

B. Constitutional and legislative framework

7. UNESCO noted that freedom of expression was protected under article 47 of the Constitution of Qatar; however, the Press and Publication Law of 1979 regulated all media and press issues,[20] and contained harsh punishments, including imprisonment.[21] According

to the Press and Publication Law, it was a crime to criticize the Emir of Qatar or to attribute any statement to him without the permission of his office.[22]

8. UNESCO also noted that defamation was considered criminal under the State's Penal Code of 2004, which imposed up to two years' imprisonment for defaming someone. Additionally, article 327 of the Penal Code raised the penalty to three years in prison for defaming a "public employee due to the job or the occupation".[23]

9. UNESCO added that blasphemy was criminalized under the Penal Code, which prescribed up to seven years in prison for "insulting the Supreme Being in letter and spirit, in writing, drawing, gesturing or in any other way". The law also criminalized "offending, misinterpreting, or violating the Holy Koran" and banned "cursing any of the divine religions".[24]

10. UNESCO observed that a freedom of information law did not currently exist in Qatar.[25]

11. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants warned that the 2004 Labour Law, while providing some important rights and safeguards for workers, did not provide for a minimum wage, banned migrants from forming organizations and from collective bargaining and excluded domestic workers.[26]

12. CERD understood that domestic work was regulated under bilateral agreements with sending countries, and was concerned that such bilateral agreements might lead to discrimination prohibited under the Convention, including in the area of the right to equal pay for equal work.[27]

13. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants expressed satisfaction with work on a draft law on domestic workers, and urged that it be finalized and adopted in order to better safeguard the rights of domestic workers, whose abuse was rarely visible.[28]

C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure and policy measures

Status of national human rights institutions[29]

National human rights institution	*Status during previous cycle*	*Status during present cycle*[30]
National Human Rights Committee	A (2009)	A (2010)

14. CAT welcomed the amendment to the Act establishing the National Human Rights Committee (Act No. 38 of 2002), by Decree-Law No. 17 of 2010.[31] CERD and CRC noted with satisfaction the establishment of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and expressed appreciation for its work.[32] CERD strongly urged Qatar to consider the recommendations of NHRC.[33]

15. CAT further encouraged Qatar to consider reducing the number of governmental officials who were members of NHRC and limiting their roles, in particular in undertaking detention monitoring and adopting recommendations, with a view to strengthening the full independence of NHRC in line with the Paris Principles.[34]

16. While noting the role of NHRC in monitoring detention facilities and raising cases of human rights violations with the authorities, CAT expressed concern about reports that NHRC visits were infrequent and sometimes refused and that NHRC lacked medical expertise and interpreters for the visits.[35] CAT recommended that Qatar ensure that NHRC was able to impartially monitor and investigate torture and ill-treatment.[36]

17. CERD welcomed the establishment of the Qatari Foundation to Combat Human Trafficking, the Qatari Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children, the Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue and the Doha Centre for Media Freedom.[37]

II. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

A. Cooperation with treaty bodies[38]

1. Reporting status

Treaty body	*Concluding observations included in previous review*	*Latest report submitted since previous review*	*Latest concluding observations*	*Reporting status*
CERD	March 2002	2011	March 2012	Seventeenth to twentieth reports due in 2015
CEDAW	–	2011	–	Initial report pending consideration (February 2014)
CAT	July 2006	2011	November 2012	Third report due in 2016
CRC	October 2009 (CRC)/October 2007 (OP-CRC-AC)/June 2006 (OP-CRC-SC)	–	–	Third and fourth reports overdue since May 2013
CRPD	–	2012	–	Initial report pending consideration

2. Responses to specific follow-up requests by treaty bodies

Concluding observations

Treaty body	*Due in*	*Subject matter*	*Submitted in*
CERD	March 2013	Information on the Domestic Workers' Bill; legal framework protecting refugees and asylum seekers; and protection of the right to property of migrant workers[39]	–
CAT	November 2014	Ensuring or strengthening legal safeguards for persons detained; conducting prompt, impartial and effective investigations; prosecuting suspects and sanctioning perpetrators of torture or ill-treatment; and violence against women[40]	–

Views

Treaty body	*Number of views*	*Status*
–	–	–

18. While acknowledging the various steps taken by Qatar to reform some of its legislation, CAT noted with concern that many of the recommendations adopted by the Committee following the consideration of the State's initial report had not yet been implemented.[41]

B. Cooperation with special procedures[42]

	Status during previous cycle	*Current status*
Standing invitation	No	Yes
Visits undertaken	Trafficking (2006)	Migrants (November 2013)
Visits agreed to in principle	–	Independence of judges and lawyers (January 2014)
Visits requested	–	–
Responses to letters of allegations and urgent appeals	In the period under review, four communications were sent. The Government replied to all of those communications.	

C. Cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

19. Qatar has made annual financial contributions to OHCHR since 2002.[43]

III. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

A. Equality and non-discrimination

20. CERD recommended that Qatar incorporate into national law a definition of racial discrimination that was in line with article 1 of the Convention.[44]

21. CERD was concerned that the current provisions addressing racial and religious discord in Qatari society were not in line with article 4 of the Convention.[45]

22. CERD noted with concern the discriminatory provision of the Law on Nationality which prevented Qatari women who were married to non-citizens from transmitting Qatari nationality to their children, which had the potential to lead to the children being stateless. It recommended that Qatar revise the law to allow Qatari women to transmit their citizenship to their children without discrimination.[46] The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) raised similar concerns and made similar recommendations.[47]

23. CERD noted with concern the restrictions imposed on migrant workers and foreign residents in buying and owning property.[48]

24. CERD expressed concern at the persistence of racist stereotypes and recommended that Qatar step up efforts to provide human rights training and to raise awareness of the need for tolerance, interracial or inter-ethnic understanding and intercultural relations among law enforcement officials and teachers.[49]

B. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

25. CAT noted with concern that, according to the information provided by Qatar, the State had not recorded any complaint concerning torture or ill-treatment, which contradicted a number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees submitted by several sources, including NHRC. The Committee urged Qatar to ensure that information about the possibility of and procedure for filing a complaint against the police was made available and widely publicized, including by being prominently displayed in all detention facilities.[50]

26. While noting that the new act regulating penitentiaries and correctional institutions (Act No. 3 of 2009) made no provision for the use of flogging as a disciplinary sanction, unlike the previous law (Act No. 3 of 1995), CAT remained concerned that flogging and stoning continued to be punishments under article 1 of the Criminal Code. The Committee referred to allegations that at least 45 people had been given flogging sentences between 2009 and 2011. CAT recommended that Qatar end its imposition of corporal punishment and ensure that criminal sanctions were in full conformity with the Convention.[51]

27. CAT recommended that Qatar implement the amended definition of torture under articles 159 and 159 bis of the Criminal Code and ensure that the crime of torture and ill-treatment was punishable by appropriate penalties.[52]

28. CAT urged Qatar to ensure that full independent monitoring of all places used for deprivation of liberty, including the Deportation Detention Centre, psychiatric facilities and the State security prison, took place on a regular basis, including through unannounced visits, and to follow up effectively on the outcome of such systematic monitoring in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.[53]

29. CAT expressed concern over the persistence of violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual violence against domestic workers. It recommended that Qatar strengthen its efforts to prevent violence against women by, inter alia, establishing effective measures to guarantee the right of victims to complain; ensuring the accountability of all perpetrators by undertaking effective investigations into complaints, prosecuting perpetrators and punishing them with appropriate penalties; and ensuring that all victims were provided with adequate redress and reparation, including compensation and the means for as full rehabilitation as possible.[54]

30. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants drew special attention to the long-term administrative detention, in some cases as much as one year, that could be applied to migrants awaiting deportation under the 2009 sponsorship law. He urged the authorities to rely systematically on non-custodial measures rather than detention.[55] The Special Rapporteur also observed that the deportation centre was overcrowded and unsanitary.[56]

31. The same Special Rapporteur noted that the majority of the women in the deportation centre in Qatar, particularly the domestic workers, had "run away" from abusive employers and wanted to return to their countries of origin. He added that children should never find themselves in detention and that migrant women with children should always be hosted in shelters.[57]

32. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants warned that several women had been sentenced to prison for "adultery" for having a baby while being unmarried. Such women served their sentences in prison with their babies in conditions that were in clear violation of the principle of the best interest of the child.[58]

33. UNHCR noted that the Government had not reported any clear efforts to investigate, prosecute or punish trafficking offences made during the reporting period, leading to gaps in fully addressing human trafficking.[59]

34. UNHCR stressed the need for mechanisms to identify victims of trafficking, in order to ensure that individuals who had been trafficked and who feared being subjected to persecution upon return to their country of origin or feared being trafficked again were recognized as refugees (in accordance with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol), and afforded international protection.[60]

35. CAT was concerned that Qatar continued to be a destination country for men and women subjected to forced labour and forced prostitution. The Committee was also concerned that article 5 of Law No. 15 of 2011 on trafficking allowed for the return of victims to their countries without ensuring an assessment of risk upon return. It recommended that Qatar: effectively implement the current laws combating trafficking; ensure systematic procedures to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable groups and provide protection for victims and access for them to medical, social rehabilitative and legal services; and create adequate conditions for victims to exercise their right to make complaints, and conduct effective investigations into all allegations of trafficking.[61]

C. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

36. The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers noted that the constitutional provisions relating to the separation of powers did not seem to be fully implemented. She also noted that the Prosecutor General had the rank of Minister, which might create confusion regarding his independence from the executive.[62]

37. The same Special Rapporteur observed that the judicial system continued to face challenges, especially in relation to the independence of judges, prosecutors and lawyers, which affected the delivery of justice and the enforcement of human rights. Those challenges should be addressed in order to bring the administration of justice in Qatar into line with international human rights standards.[63]

38. The Special Rapporteur noted with concern that women were still faced with institutionalized gender discrimination within the administration of justice, as there were only two women among the 198 judges. She also noted that there were major obstacles to women's access to justice. She encouraged the Government to take measures to facilitate women's appointment as judges and to mainstream a ¿ender-based approach in the justice system, as that would empower women to gain access to justice and claim their rights.[64]

39. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants warned that it was difficult for migrants to gain access to complaint mechanisms, owing partly to a lack of information and partly to a fear of losing their jobs and being subsequently detained and deported. He stated that more efforts were needed to provide effective access to justice.[65] The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers raised similar concerns.[66]

40. CAT recommended that Qatar strengthen its efforts to provide legal protection to migrant workers and guarantee access to justice; adopt labour legislation covering domestic work and providing legal protection to migrant domestic workers against exploitation, ill-treatment and abuse; and consider abolishing the sponsorship system for all migrant workers, as recommended by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children.[67] CERD made similar recommendations.[68]

41. CAT regretted the lack of information provided by Qatar on complaints of violence made by migrant domestic workers.[69] CERD urged Qatar to put in place effective measures to address multiple discrimination against female domestic workers, including in their places of work.[70]

42. While noting that article 39 of the Constitution and articles 40, 112 and 113 of the Criminal Procedure Code provided some legal safeguards to detainees, CAT was concerned

that those provisions were not always respected in practice, in particular for non-citizens. CAT remained concerned that the Attorney General might extend detention without charges for 16 days. Of further concern were reports of persons detained without charge or trial, including a case undertaken by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.[71]

43. CAT recommended that Qatar ensure that all detainees, including non-citizens, were afforded all fundamental legal safeguards from the very outset of detention.[72]

44. CAT was deeply concerned that persons detained under the provisions of the Protection of Society Law (Law No. 17 of 2002), the Law on Combating Terrorism (Law No. 3 of 2004) and the Law on the State Security Agency (Law No. 5 of 2003) might be held for a lengthy period of time without charge, without access to a lawyer or an independent doctor and without the right to notify a family member. CAT was concerned about reports that persons detained under those laws were often subject to incommunicado detention or solitary confinement, as seen in several cases.[73] CAT urged Qatar to ensure that all fundamental safeguards were provided for all persons deprived of their liberty.[74]

45. CAT noted with concern the extremely low number of cases of compensation and rehabilitation for victims. It recommended that Qatar strengthen its efforts to provide victims of torture and other ill-treatment with adequate reparation and compensation, include migrant workers and persons subjected to trafficking in redress programmes and ensure that they had access to effective remedies for torture and ill-treatment.[75]

46. CAT reiterated its serious concern that the minimum age of criminal responsibility was 7 years. It recommended that Qatar accelerate the processing of legislative measures, including the draft law on children's rights, to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to an internationally acceptable level; and ensure the full implementation of juvenile justice standards.[76] CRC raised similar concerns and made similar recommendations.[77]

D. Freedom of religion or belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly, and right to participate in public and political life

47. CAT regretted the lack of information on the case of a human rights activist and founder of a human rights organization who was arrested in March 2011 and detained for a month without charge. Furthermore, it noted with concern allegations of the recent arrests and detention of other human rights defenders.[78] The Committee recommended that Qatar ensure the protection of human rights defenders from intimidation or violence as a result of their activities.[79]

48. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concern about the case of a well-known poet who had been sentenced to 15 years in prison for allegedly encouraging the overthrowing of the ruling system in Qatar and insulting the "nation's symbols". The High Commissioner also expressed concern about the harsh, disproportionate sentence, the fairness of the trial procedures, and the time the person had spent in solitary confinement. The High Commissioner called for respect of his right to freedom of expression and demanded his immediate release.[80]

49. CERD was concerned that certain political rights were not fully enjoyed by naturalized citizens on an equal basis with citizens born in Qatar. It noted that, although such legal restrictions were not practised in reality, the mere existence of such restrictions posed a threat to the full enjoyment of political rights by all citizens. The Committee recommended that Qatar revise its laws regarding political rights, to guarantee that such rights were fully enjoyed and exercised by all citizens without any discrimination.[81]

E. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

50. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants urged the Government of Qatar to review the sponsorship (*kafala*) system, which was used to regulate the relationship between employers and migrant workers with a work permit linked to a single employer, which, in the view of the Special Rapporteur, was problematic and a source of abuse against migrants.[82]

51. CAT was deeply concerned about reports of widespread torture or ill-treatment and abuse of migrant workers, in particular under the sponsorship system, and about constraints faced by such workers on lodging complaints against their employers. The Committee noted the concerns raised by CERD that, despite the legal provisions prohibiting conduct such as the withholding of passports and wages by sponsors, the fundamental nature of the sponsorship system increased the dependency of migrant workers on sponsors, rendering them vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and abuses. In addition, CAT regretted the absence of labour legislation that would protect domestic work.[83] CERD raised similar concerns.[84]

52. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants welcomed the positive legislative developments in Qatar that had made it illegal for sponsors to confiscate passports. However, he noted the need for effective enforcement of that law. He added that abolishing the sponsorship system and replacing it by a regulated open labour market would solve issues that had arisen under the system and ensure the mobility of labour.[85]

53. The same Special Rapporteur warned that many migrants faced human rights violations in the workplace; some were not paid their wages or were paid less than agreed. He also expressed concern about the number of accidents on construction sites and about hazardous working conditions that resulted in injury or death. He urged the authorities to allow the creation of health and safety committees on which workers would be represented, and recommended establishing a minimum wage for all workers, including domestic workers.[86]

54. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants welcomed the ban on Qatari agencies charging recruitment fees, but was concerned that migrant workers were forced to pay fees in their home countries in order to travel to Qatar. Upon arrival in Qatar, migrant workers were faced with different contracts with lower salaries, and different job descriptions. He noted the need to formalize the recruitment process and to monitor private recruitment agencies.[87]

55. CERD was concerned that the majority of workers who were foreigners might have difficulty understanding contracts and other documents, which effectively prevented them from giving informed consent regarding their employment.[88] It recommended that Qatar revise the relevant provision of the Labour Code to ensure that contracts and other documents concerning the employment of the migrant workers were provided in their languages.[89]

F. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

56. UNHCR recommended that Qatar accede to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, adopt national asylum legislation and ensure full respect of the principle of non-refoulement.[90]

57. CAT was concerned about the absence of national legislation and procedures explicitly regulating expulsion, refoulement and extradition. It regretted the lack of information on the case of the forced return to her country of origin of a woman who had

been allegedly raped by soldiers there, even though she had been recognized as a refugee by UNHCR.[91]

58. CAT recommended that Qatar adopt national asylum legislation and procedures providing effective protection to asylum seekers and refugees from refoulement to a State where there were substantial grounds for believing that he or she would be in danger of being subjected to torture or ill-treatment.[92]

Notes

[1] Unless indicated otherwise, the status of ratification of instruments listed in the table may be found on the official website of the United Nations Treaty Collection database, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, http://treaties.un.org/. Please also refer to the United Nations compilation on Qatar from the previous cycle (A/HRC/WG.6/7/QAT/2).

[2] The following abbreviations have been used for the present document:

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
CPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

[3] Individual complaints: ICCPR-OP 1, art. 1; OP-CEDAW, art. 1; OP-CRPD, art. 1; OP-ICESCR, art. 1; OP-CRC-IC, art. 5; ICERD, art. 14; CAT, art. 22; ICRMW, art. 77; and CPED, art. 31. Inquiry procedure: OP-CEDAW, art. 8; CAT, art. 20; CPED, art. 33; OP-CRPD, art. 6; OP-ICESCR, art. 11; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 13. Inter-State complaints: ICCPR, art. 41; ICRMW, art. 76; CPED, art. 32; CAT, art. 21; OP-ICESCR, art. 10; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 12. Urgent action: CPED, art. 30.

[4] Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

[5] Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Convention); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Convention); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); and Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts

(Protocol II). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.

[6] International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour; Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour; Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation; Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

[7] 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

[8] International Labour Organization Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise; Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively; and Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.

[9] International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries and Convention No. 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

[10] Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.

[11] Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/QAT/CO/2), para. 26.

[12] Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16), para. 22.

[13] Ibid., para. 25.

[14] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 9.

[15] Ibid., para. 15.

[16] Ibid., para. 21 (c).

[17] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 17.

[18] Ibid., para. 13.

[19] UNESCO submission to UPR on Qatar, para. 34.

[20] Ibid., paras. 26-27.

[21] Ibid., para. 42.

[22] Ibid., para. 27.

[23] Ibid., para. 28.

[24] Ibid., para. 29.

[25] Ibid., para. 30.

[26] OHCHR, "Qatar World Cup, crucial opportunity to improve the migrants' situation in the country – UN rights expert", press release dated 13 November 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13980&LangID=E.

[27] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 13.

[28] OHCHR, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes country visit to Qatar", press release dated 10 November 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13974&LangID=E.

[29] According to article 5 of the rules of procedure of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) Sub-Committee on Accreditation, the different classifications for accreditation used by the Sub-Committee are: A: Voting Member (fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles), B: Non-Voting Member (not fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles or insufficient information provided to make a determination), C: No Status (not in compliance with the Paris Principles).

[30] For the list of national human rights institutions with accreditation status granted by the ICC, see A/HRC/23/28, annex.

[31] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 5 (e).

[32] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 8; concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/QAT/CO/2), para. 15.

[33] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 8.

[34] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 16.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.
[37] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 7.
[38] The following abbreviations have been used for the present document:

CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CAT	Committee against Torture
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

[39] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 28.
[40] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 28.
[41] Ibid., para. 6.
[42] For the titles of special procedures, see www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Themes.aspx and www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Countries.aspx.
[43] See, for example, OHCHR, *Annual Report 2012*, pp. 117 and 168.
[44] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 10.
[45] Ibid., para. 11.
[46] Ibid., para. 16.
[47] UNHCR submission to UPR on Qatar, p. 6.
[48] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 18.
[49] Ibid., para. 21.
[50] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 14.
[51] Ibid., para. 12.
[52] Ibid., para. 8.
[53] Ibid., para. 15.
[54] Ibid., para. 19.
[55] OHCHR, "Qatar World Cup, crucial opportunity to improve the migrants' situation in the country – UN rights expert".
[56] OHCHR, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes country visit to Qatar".
[57] OHCHR, "Qatar World Cup, crucial opportunity to improve the migrants' situation in the country – UN rights expert".
[58] Ibid.
[59] UNHCR submission to UPR on Qatar, p. 5.
[60] Ibid., p. 4.
[61] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 20.
[62] OHCHR, "Preliminary observations on the official visit to the State of Qatar by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (19–26 January 2014)", press release dated 26 January 2014. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14202&LangID=E.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] OHCHR, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes country visit to Qatar".
[66] OHCHR, "Preliminary observations on the official visit to the State of Qatar by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (19–26 January 2014)".
[67] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 18.
[68] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 15.
[69] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 18.
[70] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 14.
[71] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 10. See also A/HRC/WGAD/2010/25.
[72] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 10.
[73] Ibid., para. 11. See also A/HRC/WGAD/2010/25 and A/HRC/WGAD/2011/68.
[74] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 11 (a).
[75] Ibid., para. 24.
[76] Ibid., para. 22.
[77] CRC/C/QAT/CO/2, paras. 70 and 71.
[78] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 17. See also A/HRC/18/51, p. 66.
[79] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 17.

[80] OHCHR, briefing notes on Qatar, 22 October 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13881&LangID=E.
[81] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 20.
[82] OHCHR, "Qatar World Cup, crucial opportunity to improve the migrants' situation in the country – UN rights expert".
[83] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 18.
[84] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 15.
[85] OHCHR, "Qatar World Cup, crucial opportunity to improve the migrants' situation in the country – UN rights expert".
[86] OHCHR, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes country visit to Qatar".
[87] Ibid.
[88] CERD/C/QAT/CO/13-16, para. 12.
[89] Ibid.
[90] UNHCR submission to UPR on Qatar, p. 4.
[91] CAT/C/QAT/CO/2, para. 21.
[92] Ibid., para. 21 (a).

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Qatar*

The present report is a summary of seven stakeholders' submissions[1] to the universal periodic review. It follows the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council in its decision 17/119. It does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), nor any judgement or determination in relation to specific claims. The information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes and, to the extent possible, the original texts have not been altered. As provided for in Resolution 16/21 of the Human Rights Council, where appropriate, a separate section is provided for contributions by the national human rights institution of the State under review that is accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles. The full texts of all submissions received are available on the OHCHR website. The report has been prepared taking into consideration the periodicity of the review and developments during that period.

* The present document was not edited before being sent to United Nations translation services.

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I. Information provided by the accredited national human rights institution of the State under review in full compliance with the Paris Principles

A. Background and framework

1. National Human Rights Committee of Qatar (NHRC) noted the establishment of several institutions in the field of human rights that play an important role in monitoring the compliance of government agencies with the fundamental principles of human rights as well as its role in spreading the culture of human rights.[2]

2. Newly established institutions such as: The Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Qatar foundation for Child and Women Protection, Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking, the Doha Centre for Media Freedom, and NHRC monitor human rights violations of governmental and non-governmental organisations.[3]

3. NHRC recommended amending the Law No. 38 of 2005 on the acquisition of Qatari nationality, in order to achieve equality between all citizens.[4]

4. NHRC criticized law No. 17 of 2002 on the Protection of the Community, which provides official exemption from the prohibition of arbitrary arrest and detention, hence the restrictions to the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.[5] The NHRC recommended amending the law, because it grants law enforcement officers broad power to arrest individuals for prolonged period of time without considering the restrictions of the Criminal Procedure Law No. 23 for 2004.[6]

5. NHRC recommended amending the Law No. 3 of 2004 on Combating Terrorism, which grants the extension of pre-trial detention and other punitive measures that restrict the right of freedom of movement and residence.[7]

6. NHRC recommended amending the Law of the Associations and Private Institutions Law in order to remove restrictions on the establishment of associations.[8]

7. NHRC recommended amending the Law regulating the entry and exit of expatriates into Qatar, and to cancel the sponsorship system and the exit permits.[9]

B. Implementation of international human rights obligations

8. Regarding to equality and nationality rights, NHRC noted that Qatari women married to non-Qatari men are subject to discrimination as their children cannot obtain Qatari citizenship, as per article 34 of the Nationality Act for 2005.[10]

9. NHRC warned that women's participation in the decision-making process is still limited, in particular with regards to their participation in the Parliament.[11] There are currently no female representatives in The *Shura* Council (the legislative branch) as the current law only authorizes nomination of males.[12]

10. NHRC noted that the advancement of women is the responsibility of the government agencies, and that lack of civil associations concerned with women's issues, and the continued promotion of the stereotyped image of women by traditional culture, leads to restricting their participation in certain areas, and limits their access to leadership positions in different institutions.[13]

11. NHRC warned about the limitations on political participation for naturalised Qataris or persons whose citizenship was withdrawn but subsequently restored which defies the principle of equality embedded in the constitution. Law 38 for 2005 denies the candidacy or the nomination to any legislative body in the government for a period of 10 years from the date of restoration of citizenship.[14]

12. NHRC stated that the death penalty is applicable in Qatar; however the death sentence was not implemented since 1995.[15]

13. NHRC was concerned about Law No. 3 for 2004 on Combating Terrorism, which grants prosecutors discretionary powers to extend pre-trial detention and take punitive measures restricting the right to freedom of movement and residence.[16]

14. On freedom of association and peaceful assembly, NHRC warned that law No. 18 for 2004 on Public Meetings and Demonstrations includes several provisions that impose restrictions on exercising this right. NHRC recommended that these restrictions should be reconsidered.[17]

15. NHRC stated that the law on Associations and Institutions should be revised in order to reduce restrictions on the procedures for establishing associations.[18]

16. NHRC noted that Qatar has recently witnessed a great breakthrough in the field of freedom of opinion and expression, at the level of individuals, media, and publishing. QNHRC recommended amending the Press and Media Law, which contains restrictions on the exercise of media activities.[19]

17. NHRC stated that the lack of qualified professionals presents a challenge to the education of persons with disabilities, which in turn limits the acceptance of children with disabilities in schools.[20]

18. NHRC noted that there are still many obstacles challenging [migrant] worker's rights, despite the efforts of the State. Domestic workers lack legal protection, while construction workers suffer poor working conditions, with some not getting their salaries and others suffer from ill treatment and poor living conditions.[21]

19. NHRC reported that workers function under harsh working conditions given the high temperature and humidity, in addition to dealing with hazardous material and equipment, which result in many cases of injuries.[22]

20. NHRC observed that, domestic workers' rights constitute a significant challenge because they are more likely to be abused than others, due to violations of labour law and the lack of specific legislation regulating labour affairs. NHRC monitored cases where domestic workers were made to work excessive hours without being given adequate time off work in addition to their inability to resort to the Department of Labour.[23]

21. NHRC noted the restriction against foreign workers as they may only leave the country temporarily or permanently on submission of an exit permit that can only be granted by their sponsor.[24]

22. NHRC stated that in order for workers to file complaints at the Labour Court, they are obliged to pay fees to produce an expert report that examines their complaints against the employer. This is a long process before the civil and labour courts, and constitutes a major challenge for workers' rights, especially in the light of their inability to leave the country (during the litigation period) or switch employers.[25]

II. Information provided by other stakeholders

A. Background and framework

1. Scope of international obligations

23. According to JS2, Qatar has ratified few international human rights instruments. Nevertheless, it has ratified ILO Convention 29 on Forced or Compulsory Labour and is bound as a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to respect the principles of freedom of association under the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

2. Constitutional and legislative framework

24. According to the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment for Children (GIEACPC), Qatar has accepted recommendations -in the first cycle- to end corporal punishment. However, the government needs to enact legislation that explicitly prohibits corporal punishment in schools, homes, and alternative care settings. A new legislation is needed in order to ensure that children convicted of '*hudud*' or '*qisas*' offences may not be sentenced to corporal punishment under '*Sharia'a*' law.[26] AI voiced similar concerns.[27]

25. JS1 expressed concern about the legislative and extra-legal measures taken by the Qatari Government, which drastically curbs civil society activism and the freedom of association for unions.[28]

26. JS2 warned that the government both fails to maintain a legal framework sufficient to protect the rights of migrant workers consistent with international law and to enforce the legal protections that currently do exist. The employment of migrant workers in Qatar is governed largely by three laws - Law 14 of 2004 (Labour Law); Law 4 of 2009 (Sponsorship Law); and, Law 15 of 2011 (Trafficking in Persons Law). Of particular concern, the sponsorship law, among the most restrictive in the Gulf region, facilitates the exaction of forced labour by, among other things, making it very difficult for a migrant worker to leave an abusive employer.[29]

27. HRW noted that the situation of domestic workers remains an issue of grave concern. The Labour laws of Qatar do not cover domestic workers. Accordingly, a regional unified contract for domestic workers –expected to be approved by the government- falls well short of the minimum standards outlined in the recently adopted ILO Domestic Workers' Convention.[30]

28. JS2 noted that while Qatari law prohibits recruitment agencies based and registered in Qatar from charging workers fees or costs for their recruitment. However, it does not address or seek to prohibit recruitment firms using affiliated organizations abroad that can, and do, charge these fees. The law also fails to place an affirmative duty on the employers to pay recruitment-related expenses.[31]

B. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

1. Equality and non-discrimination

29. Al Karama Foundation (AF) warned that even though Article 34 of the Qatari constitution guarantees equal treatment for all citizens, still, article 12 of the code governing nationality (Law No. 38/2005) shows that naturalized persons enjoy less protection because their Qatari nationality can be revoked at any time under a simple

proposition from the Minister of the Interior. The inequality between those who are of Qatari origin and those who are naturalized citizens is evident, as naturalized citizens do not enjoy the same political rights as those of Qatari origin. No matter how long naturalised citizens have held Qatari nationality, they cannot vote, nor can they stand for election.[32]

30. AI noted that women continue to face discrimination in law and practice and are inadequately protected against violence within the family. In particular, family law discriminates against women, making it much easier for men to seek divorce than for women, and placing women at a severe economic disadvantage if they seek divorce or their husbands leave them.[33]

2. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

31. AF noted that Qatar is yet to provide appropriate penalties for the crime of torture, taking into account the severity of the crime.[34]

32. AF cited the case of an expatriate that highlights Qatar's violation of article 3 of the Convention against Torture (CAT). While working as an *Imam* of a mosque in Doha, he was summoned by the police on 18 October 2010 for questioning. The police informed him that he was under arrest on the grounds that he was wanted by third country authorities. He was then extradited to the third country without having being notified of his right to appeal against this decision. He is still being held in the same third country, where, as feared, he was severely tortured. This case highlights the need for the State to adopt specific legislation in this regard.[35]

33. AI warned that gender-based violence, including rape and other forms of sexual abuse, is widespread, in particular against domestic workers, the vast majority of whom are foreign nationals. There is no specific law criminalizing domestic violence, although victims can make complaints of physical or sexual abuse under the Criminal Code. Testimonies from domestic workers interviewed by AI and interviews with migrant community representatives indicate that the use of physical violence and sexual abuse by employers – both male and female – is not unusual. Many domestic workers are fearful to report such abuse to the authorities, in some cases because they fear being accused of "illicit relations" – which is a criminal offence under the Criminal Code.[36]

34. AF remains concerned about the lack of legal provisions expressly prohibiting the expulsion, return or extradition of a person to another State where there were substantial grounds for believing that he or she would be subjected to torture as stipulated in article 3 of the Convention, as well as the absence of an effective appeals process available to persons likely to be subject to such measures.[37]

35. AI reported information that since 2006 around a dozen people detained under the Protection of Society Law without charge or trial have been subjected to incommunicado detention for weeks or even months in some instances. In March 2013, two activists were arrested without a warrant at a checkpoint manned by plain-clothes security force personnel. They were held for 28 days without charge or trial, the first four days of which were incommunicado and in solitary confinement. After that they were granted irregular access to family and lawyers. On the day of their release, after being told that no prosecution would be brought against them, they received a text message from the Interior Ministry informing them that they were banned from leaving the country. No explanation was provided.[38]

36. AI has documented cases of both construction and domestic workers in Qatar being subjected to conditions amounting to forced labour and human trafficking.[39]

3. Administration of justice, including impunity (*part to be added only if relevant*), and the rule of law

37. AF argued that the independence of the judicial system remains to be a challenge, notably due to the fact that some of the judicial personnel are non-national individuals working on temporary contracts. They are generally originating from other Arab countries, and are directly appointed by the executive authorities. Their residency status may constitute a serious hindrance to their independence and capacity to exercise their functions serenely. The tenure principle of judges, which is essential to the independence of the judicial system, cannot be guaranteed under these conditions.[40]

38. AF added that while the creation of the Supreme Judicial Council (an institution mandated to propose legislation relating to the judicial system and give advice on the appointment of judges) in 1999 was welcomed, the procedure for appointing members of the Council is contrary to the proclaimed objective of this institution, namely the independence of the justice system, because the power to appoint or revoke the totality of its members is left entirely up to the Emir.[41]

39. AI noted that under Qatar's Code of Criminal Procedures, detainees must be charged or released within 48 hours following arrest, unless a prosecutor extends their detention without charge for up to a further 16 days, following which they must be brought before a judge. The Code also stipulates that detainees must be informed of their right to contact whomever they wish. However, these guarantees do not apply where individuals are detained under Law No. 17 of 2002 on the Protection of Society and Law No. 3 of 2004 on Combating Terrorism.[42]

40. HRW noted that authorities rarely, if ever, bring criminal prosecutions against employers for violating Qatar's labour or trafficking laws.[43]

4. Freedom of movement

41. JS2 stated that under the Sponsorship Law of 2009, employers enjoy near total control over the movement of workers in their employ, including over their ability to reside in Qatar, to change jobs or even to leave the country. Workers under such control are often afraid to report abuses or assert their rights for fear of retaliation, which further contributes to their situation in forced labour.[44]

42. HRW shared the same concerns, stating that all foreign workers must obtain an exit visa from their sponsor in order to leave Qatar. This exit visa requirement is not needed to prevent foreigners fleeing court cases in Qatar, as the Interior Ministry has separate powers to impose travel bans on non-citizens facing criminal charges or civil claims in Qatar's courts. There are also concerns over the arbitrary manner in which Qatar imposes indefinite travel bans against individuals accused of criminal or civil offences by their employers. The exit visa requirement and the authorities' use of arbitrary travel bans means that Qatari employers can prevent their foreign employees from leaving Qatar indefinitely, power they may use unfairly to secure concessions from foreign employees with whom they are in dispute.[45]

43. JS2 highlighted another element of the abusive sponsorship system, which is the condition that migrant workers are forbidden to leave the country without the consent of the employer. Thus, even if the worker has the means to leave the country, they cannot freely do so without permission, making it difficult to leave abusive employment. In other cases, employers will extort the workers for money in order to grant them permission to leave[46]. AF noted similar concerns.[47]

5. Freedom of religion or belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly, and right to participate in public and political life

44. HRW stated that even though Qatar accepted recommendations to lift the restrictions on the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and to take steps to promote freedom of the press in all forms of media, it has failed to do so, and the provisions of the draft Media Law of 2012 restrict the freedom of media and curtail the freedom of expression.[48]

45. JS1 warned that despite legal guarantees for freedom of expression in the Constitution, the government continues to invoke restrictive and overboard legislation to arrest and imprison journalists and bloggers and other government critics who report the sensitive topics. JS1 added that the government continues to drastically limit access to international media and Internet news sites and strictly controls domestic media outlets. JS1 argued that the government's campaign to silence dissenting voices has severely jeopardised freedom of expression and has cast a chill over independent media.[49]

46. Amnesty International (AI) noted that Freedom of expression is strictly controlled in Qatar, and the press often exercises self-censorship. The right to freedom of expression is further curtailed by the 2004 Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, to which Qatar acceded in May 2008, and whose provisions risk criminalizing legitimate activities. The government has recently moved to further tighten its control over freedom of expression through new cybercrime and draft media laws. If approved, the new media law would require all publications to be approved by a government-appointed "competent authority" empowered to remove content or prevent printing.[50]

47. JS1 argued that the 1997 Press and Publications Law provide up to six months in prisons for individuals who criticize the Emir of Qatar or make attributions to him without express permission from his office[51]. HRW voiced similar concerns.[52]

48. JS1 added that the 1997 Press and Publications Law contains several broad provisions placing blanket proscriptions on certain speech including requirements that journalists refrain from reporting on issues which may cause damage to the "supreme interest of the country" or are "offensive to public morals."[53]

49. JS1 warned that journalists, citizens and poets continue to continue to come under attack and face judicial harassment for commenting on sensitive topics. A prominent poet was given a life sentence on 29 November 2012 for "inciting to overthrow the ruling regime" and "insulting the Emir" under articles 130 and 134 of the Penal Code. The sentence against the poet, who was arrested following a number of poems published on the Internet criticising the Emir of Qatar and calling for democratic reforms, was reduced to 15 years in February 2013[54]. AF shared the same concerns.[55]

50. JS1 noted that foreign journalists operating in Qatar are also subjected to a number of unwarranted and excessive restrictions. The Qatar Foreign Information Agency, responsible for the accreditation of all foreign journalists operating in the country, is endowed with the power to unilaterally and permanently ban journalists from entering Qatar without the provision of an official explanation. On 1 April 2011, two accredited journalists with Radio Television Suisse (RTS) were arrested while reporting on the preparation of the 2022 Football World Cup to be hosted in Qatar. Both journalists were fined and held for 13 days before being released.[56]

51. JS1 stated that the government enforces highly discriminatory registration requirements, which provides the government with excessive powers to preclude the establishment of civil society organisations; hence, no independent human rights organisations are permitted to operate in the country. Under article 35 of the Associations and Private Institutions Law (Law No. 12 of 2004) CSOs are prohibited from participating

in undefined "political issues." Moreover, CSOs must secure authorization from the Ministry of Social Affairs, which can refuse to register an organization if it considers them a threat to the public interest. As result, the number of CSOs registered in the country remains highly limited.[57]

52. JS2 noted that the current laws in Qatar violate the principles of freedom of association as the law forbids non-Qatari workers from membership in labour organisations, thus excluding more than 90 per cent of the total workforce in the country.[58]

53. JS1 warned that the broad proscriptions on the right to strike further undermine freedom of association for unions. According to Article 120 of Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 it is impermissible for civil servants, domestic and public health workers or members of the security services to hold a strike. Moreover, migrant workers are also explicitly forbidden from holding strikes. In September 2010 more than 90 Nepali migrant workers employed by a construction company were arrested for conducting an "illegal" strike. The workers were jailed and kept without food for several days before being finally deported. Moreover, employees with the company for less than two years were forced to cover their own travel expenses to return home.[59]

54. Regarding freedom of assembly, JS1 noted that article 44 of the Qatari Constitution provides that the "right of the citizens to assemble is guaranteed in accordance with the provisions of the law." Nonetheless, despite these legal guarantees, the government has put in place a number of stringent limitations to this right. Consequently, public demonstrations, including rallies and protests, remain almost non-existent in Qatar.[60]

55. AF noted that political parties in Qatar have not been granted the right to freedom of association given the administrative processes that remain a major deterrent from forming and registering political parties.[61]

6. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

56. AI noted that foreign migrant workers continue to be exploited and abused by their employers despite protective provisions set out in the 2004 Labour Law and related decrees. The protections in the Labour Law are not adequately enforced, and the Law specifically excludes domestic workers and some other categories of workers, thereby providing no legal protection to a significant proportion of workers in Qatar.[62]

57. AF noted with concern that a significant number of workers are from the Indian subcontinent and work in the construction industry. Their working conditions are difficult and accommodation deplorable. They do not benefit from social rights and legally speaking, are placed at the mercy of their employers.[63]

58. JS2 warned that migrant workers have reported finding themselves in exploitative situations, such as being paid far lower than promised wages, experiencing numerous unspecified deductions from wages, not being paid at all for months and/or living in abysmal living conditions with dozens of co-workers crammed into small unventilated shelters without proper plumbing, water and electricity.[64]

59. Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted with concern that workers typically pay exorbitant recruitment fees and employers regularly take control of their passports when they arrive in Qatar. The sponsorship (*kafala*) system ties a migrant worker's legal residence to his or her employer, or "sponsor." Migrant workers commonly complain that employers fail to pay their wages on time or at all, but they are barred from changing jobs without their sponsoring employer's consent other than in exceptional cases and with express Interior Ministry permission.[65]

60. JS2 added that migrant workers cannot freely seek better conditions with different employers, as they are unable to transfer employment without the consent of the

exploitative employer. Those who nevertheless quit their job without permission must be reported to the authorities as having absconded. For the fleeing worker, it is no defence under the sponsorship law that the employer has engaged in abuse or failed to pay wages for example. While workers suffering such abuse are supposed to have their sponsorship transferred if a legal action has commenced, this rarely happens in practice.[66]

61. HRW stated that workers can become undocumented when employers report them as having absconded, or when they fail to pay to renew workers' annual ID cards. A lack of proper documentation leaves workers at constant risk of arrest and detention or deportation, and at even greater risk of labour exploitation.[67]

62. AI argued that the sponsorship law of 2009, which requires all foreign workers to obtain a sponsor's permission to leave Qatar or change employer, is exploited by employers to deter foreign workers from complaining to the authorities or moving to a new job in the event of abuse. There is a mechanism within the Sponsorship Law for workers to move jobs in the event of "abuse" by their sponsors, but only 49 people were transferred permanently and 211 temporarily by this means in 2012. Although the Sponsorship Law prohibits employers from confiscating workers' passports, this provision of the Law is not adequately enforced.[68]

63. JS2 argued that migrant workers have no effective means of redress, and that the government does little to protect the rights of workers, such as remedy the abuses, or sanction the perpetrators.[69]

64. JS2 noted that the language barrier does not permit a thorough follow through of complaints presented by migrant workers. The inspectors, who are supposed to deal with complaints, can only speak Arabic and few speak English, while the workers who are mostly vulnerable to exploitation, can communicate in languages other than their own. The absence of interpretation or inspectors with languages abilities hinders the ability of migrant workers to file their complaints.[70]

65. JS2 warned that fear is another factor that forms an obstacle against the workers' abilities to file their complaints. Employers who learn of complaints are able to terminate the employment relationship. This renders their status in the country illegal and subject to arrest and/or deportation. Thus, many workers suffer exploitation for fear of retaliation.[71]

66. According to JS2, the law prohibits migrant workers in Qatar from associating and forming unions, to defend their rights. They have no effective means to combat forced labour or to otherwise bargain over the terms and conditions of their work. The country's labour inspection and justice system have proven highly inadequate to enforce the few rights that migrant workers do have under Qatari law.[72]

67. JS2 warned that the lack of freedom of association in Qatar is ultimately responsible for the deaths of numerous migrant workers, who face punishing working conditions on the job, including long hours of intensely physical work in extreme heat, construction work without proper safety equipment or safe and appropriate building methods and squalid living conditions in which workers are packed into sweltering barracks with little if any ventilation.[73]

68. JS1 added that the right to freedom of association and to collective bargaining for unions also remains severely curtailed in Qatar. Under the Labour Code, the establishment of independent unions is strictly prohibited. Accordingly, all union activity must be conducted under the auspices of the General Union of Workers of Qatar which is a government established and supervised union. However, according to the Article 3 of Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 a number of professional sectors are strictly excluded from joining the General Union of Workers. Among those excluded, include persons employed by the government, members of the armed forces and police personnel and all domestic and

agricultural workers. In addition, migrant workers, which make up 94 per cent of Qatar's workforce, are completely precluded from joining the union.[74]

69. HRW stated that migrant workers are prohibited from unionizing or engaging in strikes, although they constitute 99 per cent of the private sector workforce.[75]

70. JS2 added that the right to strike is effectively non-existent. Only Qatari nationals (a very small segment of the workforce) are allowed to strike, however they face restrictive conditions that make exercising this right nearly impossible.[76]

7. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living

71. HRW noted with concern that migrant workers live in cramped and unsanitary conditions, especially those working without documentation.[77]

8. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

72. According to JS2, migrant workers in Qatar constitute -roughly- 94 per cent of the workforce of Qatar – or 1.2 million workers. That number continues to rise as substantial numbers of workers continue to be recruited, largely from South Asia, to build the infrastructure and stadia for the 2022 World Cup.[78]

73. Human Rights Watch (HRW) warned that even though Qatar is upgrading its infrastructure for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the government has yet to implement reforms that are needed to afford foreign migrant workers adequate protection against serious rights abuses, including forced labour and trafficking. Since Qatar's previous UPR in 2010, Qatar has not taken any steps to reform legislation that facilitates these abuses and has therefore failed to implement the UPR recommendations that it accepted to "ensure that its domestic laws guarantee the protection of the human rights of migrant workers, including their right to freedom of movement and the right to an adequate standard of living" and to "reform the sponsorship system in order to protect employees in the event of conflict."[79]

74. JS2 warned that from the moment they begin the process of seeking work in Qatar, migrant workers are drawn into a highly exploitative system that facilitates the extortion of forced labour, by their employers.[80]

75. With regards to contracts and recruitment, JS2 noted that upon arrival in Qatar, workers are typically offered a new contract upon arrival in Qatar that bears little resemblance to what was promised or contracted in the country of origin. These contracts may be for a completely different job than described and often at wages that are lower than promised. Once workers are in Qatar, however, they have no truly effective options to seek redress and thus most simply accept the new, inferior conditions. The new contract terms often make it difficult for the worker to honour financial obligations to recruiters or lenders that fronted the money for the trip to Qatar.[81]

9. Human rights and counter-terrorism

76. AI stated that individuals detained under the Protection of Society Law can be held without charge or trial for up to six months by order of the Minister of Interior acting on the recommendation of the Director General of Public Security. Such administrative detention without charge or trial may then be extended for up to two years at the discretion of the Prime Minister. Article 3 of the law provides that detainees or their relatives may appeal in writing to the Prime Minister against the detention or its renewal. However, detention is not subject to any judicial supervision or oversight, and the courts have no jurisdiction to hear challenges to such detention or to order the release of detainees. The law also makes no provision for detainees to have access to relatives or legal counsel, effectively allowing them to be held incommunicado.[82]

Notes

[1] The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: www.ohchr.org.

Civil society

Individual submissions:

AF	Al Karama Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland;
AI	Amnesty International, London, UK;
GIEACPC	Global Initiative to end all Corporal Punishment of Children, London, UK;
HRW	Human Rights Watch, Geneva, Switzerland.

Joint submissions:

JS1	**Joint submission 1 submitted by:** CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Johannesburg (South Africa); and GCHR: Gulf Centre for Human Rights, Dublin, Ireland;
JS2	**Joint submission 2 submitted by:** ITUC: International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels, Belgium.

National human rights institution (s):

*NHRC	National Human Rights Committee for Qatar, Doha, Qatar.

[2] NHRC, p. 9.
[3] NHRC, pp. 9-12.
[4] NHRC, p. 27.
[5] NHRC, p. 13.
[6] NHRC, p. 27.
[7] NHRC, p. 27.
[8] NHRC, p. 27.
[9] NHRC, p. 27.
[10] NHRC, p. 5. See also pp. 15.
[11] NHRC, p. 5.
[12] NHRC, p. 30.
[13] NHRC, p. 6.
[14] NHRC, p 14.
[15] NHRC, p. 13.
[16] NHRC, p. 13.
[17] NHRC, p. 14.
[18] NHRC, p. 15.
[19] NHRC, p. 17.
[20] NHRC, p. 20.
[21] NHRC, p. 5.
[22] NHRC, p. 21.
[23] NHRC, p. 21.
[24] NHRC, p. 17.
[25] NHRC, p. 16.
[26] GIEACPC, p. 2.
[27] AI, p. 3.
[28] CIVICUS, p. 2.
[29] ITUC, p. 2.
[30] HRW, p. 2.
[31] JS2, p. 3.
[32] AF, Para. 14, p. 4.
[33] AI, p. 3.
[34] AF, Para. 25, p. 5.
[35] AF, Para 27, p. 5.
[36] AI, p. 3.
[37] AF, Para. 26, p. 5.
[38] AI, p. 2.
[39] AI, p. 3.
[40] AF, Para. 11, p. 2.
[41] AF, Para. 12, p. 2.

[42] AI, p. 2.
[43] HRW, p. 2.
[44] JS2, p. 3.
[45] HRW, p. 2.
[46] JS2, p. 4.
[47] AF, Para. 30-31, p. 6.
[48] HRW, p. 3.
[49] JS1, p. 4.
[50] AI, p. 1.
[51] JS1, p. 4.
[52] HRW, p. 3.
[53] JS1, p. 5.
[54] JS1, p. 5.
[55] AF, Para. 19, p. 4.
[56] JS1, p. 6.
[57] JS1, p. 3.
[58] JS2, p. 8.
[59] JS1, p. 4.
[60] JS1, p. 7.
[61] AF, Para. 17, p. 4.
[62] AI, p. 2.
[63] AF, Para. 28, pp. 5-6.
[64] JS2, pp. 3-4.
[65] HRW, p. 1.
[66] JS2, p. 4.
[67] HRW, p. 2.
[68] AI, p. 2.
[69] JS2, p. 5.
[70] JS2, p. 6.
[71] JS2, p. 6.
[72] JS2, p. 1.
[73] JS2, p. 7.
[74] JS1, p. 4.
[75] HRW, p. 1.
[76] JS2, p. 9.
[77] HRW, p. 1.
[78] JS2, p. 1.
[79] HRW, p. 1.
[80] JS2, p. 1.
[81] JS2, pp. 2-3.
[82] AI, p. 2.